

In the *Botho* worldview, a human person is a member of a community of human persons. Whilst an individual is also a person in his own individual right, such a person is primarily able to relate with others. The personality is largely corporate, where the individual is the embodiment of the whole society. From this notion, one observes that the society exists because of its individual members, meaning that everyone's contribution is vital.

Along the same communitarian lines, the term *Botho* is also employed in reference to virtue. According to Metz (2011:533). *Ubuntu* ethics, means “a normative account of what we ought to most value in life”. Metz explains that selfhood and humanness are value laden concepts, and that since selfhood is value laden “the ultimate goal in life should be to become a complete person” (2011:533). Metz asserts that identity, and solidarity are two most important values in the community. He further states that identity makes people think of themselves as belonging to one another, hence they become sympathetic and friendly with one another, while solidarity makes people “engage in mutual aid, to act in ways that are reasonably expected to benefit each other” (2011:538). Virtue is something that individual people do not initially have, but it comes after a process that requires an individual to learn the prescribed norms and social rules. It is also developed by participating in the community. Small children are required to undergo the special process of social integration into the community through specific rituals. According to Rupert Hambira in the distance past, Batswana observed rites of passages (2001). Hambira observes that the rites of passage were like a school that ran from the cradle to the grave. He gives an example of confinement of the mother and the child after birth and initiation schools for boys and girls and argues that through the rites of passage *Botho* was imparted among individuals (2001:6). Everyone has

the capacity to develop moral virtue. Values such as sharing, hospitality and family hood are at the core of *Botho*. To have virtue is to have *Botho*, and the lack of virtue is lack of *Botho*.

The three aspects of *Botho* are discussed below to illustrate how *Botho* can be applied. It is in recognition of these three aspects that one can be said to have *Botho*.

5.3 The Three Facets of *Botho*

The *Botho* perspective states that a person is a person because of, with and through other people. This is the interpretation of the saying *Motho ke motho ka batho* in Setswana and *Umuntu ngu muntu nga bantu* in Nguni languages (Dube et. al. 2016). The saying embodies the aspects of personhood as discussed below.

5.3.1 A Person Is a Person Because of Other People

This statement concerns process and socialisation. It means that mostly other people make an indispensable contribution towards what a person becomes physically, socially, and morally. Moreover, it is the community that defines an individual as significant, so that the individual cannot be considered important independent of the community.

5.3.2 A Person Is a Person With Other People

A person is a person with other people, means that personhood is made in partnership with other people. There is need for other people in one's life for one to continue to be a person. In every person's journey of life, they need companionship. For example, a rich person who owns businesses is recognised as rich because of his or her workers and clients. This companionship makes him or her to be who s/he is, and can also help him or her remain the same person.

5.3.3 A Person Is a Person Through Other People

The concept that “a person is a person through other people” invokes reciprocity. A person’s goodness to others should be rewarded with goodness in return. Emmanuel Kant’s (1991) well-known second formulation of the categorical imperative, states that you ought not to regard other people as mere means to your ends but as ends in themselves. The *Botho* perspective similarly states that in our becoming, we must regard other human persons as ends in themselves. However, the difference that *Botho* has compared to Kantianism is that *Botho* prioritises the ability to relate with other human persons while Kantianism prioritises the notion of reason. This is the argument that Menkiti (1984:172) was preoccupied with; when he said that western thought regards personhood as “some isolated static quality of rationality, will, or memory”. Most probably Menkiti was not negating rationality as an aspect of personhood, and neither is *Botho* negating rationality as a basic component of personhood. The difference between *Botho* and the Kantian philosophy is that, while Kant emphasises reason independently as the cornerstone of personhood (Gyekye 1992), *Botho* additionally acknowledges the capacity to enter into social relationships. When my goal is to acquire a PhD, I need a supervisor and I have to use my supervisor to fulfill my dream. The supervisor also has goals, s/he wants to acquire knowledge, retain his position, and get promoted or earn a better salary. Therefore, I become what I become through my supervisor, and s/he through me. We are both using each other in a positive way, if we do so cooperatively and out of concern for each other’s needs. In section 5.6.3 I discuss *Letsema* or *Molaletsa* as examples of a tripartite relationship.

5.4 Persons, Community and *Botho/Ubuntu* as Expressed by African Philosophers

This section examines several African philosophers' understanding of *Botho/Ubuntu* in light of the metaphysical and ethical aspects of personhood with which this thesis is concerned.

The discussion demonstrates how the *Botho/Ubuntu* perspective covers the holistic reality of the individual person. This discussion is done under the following topics: communitarian priority in personhood, the individual's prevalence in personhood, and reconciling irreconcilable concepts in personhood.

5.4.1 Five Ways of Identifying Personhood

Scholarship discusses five ways of identifying personhood. The first entails setting apart an individual person from impersonal things such as animals (Gaie 2007). The second method, entails distinguishing an individual person from other individual persons (see Leke Adeofe in his article "Personal Identity in African Metaphysics" (2004). These two approaches are metaphysical.

The third mode, entails identifying relationality and a capacity to fit well in society. This notion of personhood identifies a person as a moral agent, an individual capable of acting according to duty (Wiredu 1996). The fourth notion of personhood involves virtue, becoming a complete person, an agent who has fulfilled his or her duties. This is what Ifeanyi Menkiti (1984) discusses as illustrated below. A fifth sense of "person" is a being with a dignity. For example, Molefe (2022), discusses a person as one with dignity and rights in *ubuntu*.

The African understanding of normative personhood leans heavily towards communitarianism. Menkiti (1984) discusses his view about normative personhood, and its relationship with the community in Africa, in his article "Person in African Traditional

Thought”. He explains that “man is defined by reference to the environing community” (1984:171.). Likewise, Mbiti (1969:108-109) explains that in traditional life, the individual is simply part of the whole because whatever happens to the whole group happens to him/her. In a similar vein, the *Botho* outlook holds that a person becomes a real person or a good person in so far as s/he integrates her/himself into the community. Thus, to become a real or complete person, one must act for the sake of the community or live up to what it counts as excellence.

5.4.2 The Individual’s Prevalence in Personhood

As already mentioned in chapter 2, scholars traditionally accuse each other of misinterpreting the extent to which African communitarianism overrules individuality, whether normatively or metaphysically. For example, Chukwudum Okolo (2003) critiques African Metaphysics as understood by Tempels and Mbiti. Okolo criticises the idea that an individual person only becomes real in their relationships with others, and that he or she has no reality or independent personhood in him/herself. Okolo (2003:213) mentions the view that: “it is the community which makes the individual, to the extent that without the community, the individual has no existence ...” Okolo argues that communitarianism erases the individual’s identity and freedom.

Another proponent of African communitarianism who holds a similar mindset as the Setswana perspective is Thaddeus Metz (2011), who is of the view that the best interpretation of *Ubuntu* does not normatively prioritise the community over the individual person. In his view, *Ubuntu* is not detrimental to the individual person in their freedom, rights and dignity. According to Metz, *Ubuntu* is an ethic that respects both freedom and community. He explains that “the ultimate goal in life should be to become a (complete) person, a (true) self

or a (genuine) human being” (2011:533). For Metz, the role of *Ubuntu* is for the individual person to attain the fullness of personhood, which s/he does by relating communally to others, not by conforming to whatever a community demands.

5.4.3 Reconciling Irreconcilable Concepts in Personhood

At face value, it appears that there is inconsistency in the *Botho/Ubuntu* concept that accepts relations. Metz’s (2011) attempt to show that *Ubuntu* ethics is consistent with dignity and rights resulted into criticism by Anthony Oyowe (2013). Oyowe dismisses Metz’s attempt to ground freedom, dignity and rights on *Ubuntu* and argues that *Ubuntu* is inconsistent with individual dignity, freedom and rights. According to him, solidarity or harmony and freedom are irreconcilable values. Oyowe believes that one cannot be harmonious with the community and still be free. Thus, harmony is more consistent with communitarianism, but the idea of freedom is not (*ibid*). One can choose harmony or freedom but never both; by going for one, you hurt the other. One is thus caught in the middle. Oyowe is of the opinion that Metz is fragmenting the moral concept into two distinct and equally valid aims, and thereby reveals an internal incoherence.

However, Augustine Shutte (2001) correctly observes the weakness of Oyowe’s argument. He notes that the argument emanates from western thought, which is fundamentally individualistic, and fails to reconcile communal solidarity, and personal freedom. Shutte (2001:12) says,

The dominant forms of European thought, philosophical as well as political, have failed to reconcile individual freedom with social community. Freedom is understood as independence, community as dependence, and these are opposed. The reason for this failure is to be found in the materialism of European culture. In the logic of

science, if something is dependent on something else, whether an object or force, it cannot be independent. And this applies to human beings as well since they are just as material as anything else. So either you have the independence of individualism or the dependence of collectivism.

Shutte's interpretation of the African perspective on this concept is that independence and dependence are simply different sides of the same coin; that is, while the community is essential, the individual person is also essential in his or her own right. Similarly, the *Botho* perspective does not have a problem with reconciling independence (freedom) of the individual or the absolute dependence on community.

The *Botho* perspective is accommodative of the individual's aspiration to self-improvement and personal achievement. For instance, the Setswana saying, *Molapo o tlatswa ke melatswana* (a river is filled by smaller streams; Guma (1967), specifically highlights the importance of an individual. The individual is represented by the stream, and the community is represented by the river. To uphold the value of priority, the community does not necessarily deny an individual his or her potential or freedom. For example, whereas the community is a prescriber of norms (Menkiti 1984), an individual is free to develop his or her (moral) personhood. Thus, an individual determines how successful s/he becomes at being a perfect person. Further, the community makes decisions that are not only binding on the individual, but also can be questioned by the individual. If, for example, the community takes a decision that violates an individual's rights and freedom, the individual has the power to resent it. This is because the *Botho* perspective treats communal harmony and individual freedom as relative rather than absolute.

Kayange (2021), in agreement with the *Botho* perspective, follows a version of compatibilism. Kayange argues that the community is necessary because it follows from human nature, but at the same time, individuals choose to act, either based on what it dictates or on the individual's interests. He argues that the responsibility is possible because Africans have available alternatives to agree or disagree with the community. Kayange goes on to explain that a human person is determined by either the community or the self, depending on the type of virtue practiced. He explains that "... individuals may decide to act generously towards the other, as motivated by the desire to achieve communal good. In other circumstances, the African individual may act inspired by the desire to fulfill individual oriented virtues (self-regarding virtues) such as self-control" (2021:146). He contends that practical reason guides decision making, and an individual can decide to sacrifice a community-oriented virtue to fulfill a self-regarding virtue.

5.5 Incorporation and Full Personhood

The general African thought is that a person attains real or full personhood through incorporation into society. This process of moral development in line with social standards is captured well in Botswana government's Vision 2016 (1999:2), which defines *Botho* as follows:

a process for earning respect by first giving it and to gain empowerment by empowering others. It encourages people to applaud rather than to resent those who succeed. It disapproves of anti-social – disgraceful, inhuman, and criminal behaviour and encourages social justice for all.

In line with the *Botho* viewpoint, personhood is constructed during the course of one's life, from the moment of birth until death. The community plays a critical role as the human

person goes through the gradual process of social transformation. When a person has diminished in quality, the community loses its own quality. Mmualefhe (2007:12) holds that no matter how bad a human person is, one “should never give up on a person”. This is because; in their entire earthly lives, human persons are in a process or a journey of becoming. Mmualefhe goes on to state that because of the communitarian nature of Africans, one who is said to have lost *Botho* does not only reflect on his or her own being, or lack of being, but that of the family, which ultimately ends at the door of the community. Their disharmony is lack of good health for the community, so it is not merely for the one who has lost *Botho*. Thus, *Botho* is self-evaluating. The loss of *Botho* by an individual is a call to the community to re-assess itself. The total rejection by the society of one, who has lost *Botho*, puts into question the *Botho* of the very community. Mmualefhe (2007:12) contends that “we can never even be excused from the inescapable network of mutuality, by the mere fact that someone else has broken the relational code.”

Setiloane’s (1976:40) statement that *Ubuntu* is not automatically acquired means that more features of *Ubuntu* become added to every person, while other features grow in depth over the years, particularly social or moral features of personhood. This can be summed up in the words of Menkiti (1984:172-173), who states that:

[...] personhood is something which has to be achieved and is not given simply because one is born of human seed. [It] is something at which individuals could fail, could be competent, ineffective, better or worse. Hence, the African emphasised the rituals of incorporation so that what was initially biologically given can come to attain social self-hood.

Therefore, it can be expected that, generally, “the older an individual gets, the more of a person he becomes” (Menkiti 1984:173). Menkiti posits that according to the notion of *Ubuntu*, young children are not morally capable beings, so they are not yet persons at all. Incorporation means inclusion of the individual as part of the whole community. Menkiti explains that without incorporation, individuals are “mere danglers to whom the description of person does not apply” (1984:179).

As already mentioned in section 3.34, children are in the process of acquiring full personhood. This study holds that children are not full persons in the sense of moral virtue. Setiloane (1976:40) explains that a child is born with a light dignity which has to be strengthened by the dignities of others. The maturation of a child into adulthood requires the presence of other people. Therefore, adults guide children because the adults’ personal potentiality is more developed than that of children. One of the Setswana proverbs used to teach young people to be obedient to the elderly is *ngwana yo o sa utlweng molao wa batswadi o utlwa wa manong* (a child who does not hear the parents’ law hears that of the vulture). The meaning of this proverb is that children who are disobedient to their parents are vulnerable to danger.

In subsection 4.2 it is mentioned that older persons have more knowledge than younger persons. Thus, the process of personhood suggests epistemic progression. Knowledge in the African context is acquired through culture, tradition, and religion. Children are taught values through folk stories, songs and poems. Values are also instilled through socialisation. Benjamin Ray (1976) observes that the rites of passage are used as educational institution to impart values in African societies. He explains that:

The most elaborate rites of passage usually concern the initiation of the young into adulthood. In this way, a society not only socialises its young by outwardly moving them into new roles of social responsibility, but also transforming them inwardly by moulding their moral and mental disposition towards the world (1976:132-133).

Ray further explains that in the initiation ceremonies, young people go through the process of ignorance to enlightenment with divine knowledge. The Tswana tradition similarly evolved in observance of the rite of passage. *Bogwera* and *bojale* are Tswana initiation schools for boys and girls which marked the transition from childhood to adulthood.

5.6 Moral Cause and Relationships

Since chapter 3 discussed physical, social and invisible causes of personhood, this section explains the moral cause. Arguably, the most fundamental aspect of personhood from the *Botho* perspective is ethics. According to *Botho*, an individual is fundamentally a moral being, and the judgement of whether s/he is a good or bad person is based on his moral achievement. A moral wrong in the *Botho* perspective is an epistemological reality. It is a lie or failure to acknowledge reality for what it is. For example, the oppression of other people based on their sex, race, tribe, nationality, religion or age, is failure by the oppressor to acknowledge his or her interrelatedness with the victims. Moral wrongdoing is the acknowledgement of what ought not to be acknowledged, or failure to acknowledge what ought to be acknowledged. This can be compared with Kant's statement, "I ought never to act except in such a way that I could also will that my maxim should become a universal law" (1991:149). "I am because of other people", means other people define me, and I define other people, and the whole community. If I mistreat other people, they will define me as a bad person. Similarly, if I treat people with respect, they will define me as a good person.

Moreover, people and actions are deemed good or bad from the standpoint of social relationships, regardless of whether the person judges him or herself, or is judged by other people. This is because the human person does not live in splendid isolation. Thus, virtue is dependent upon interaction with the environment, including other people. The presence of other people will cause one to behave in a right or wrong way. For instance, in the case of rape, both the victim and the rapist are necessary. We can therefore argue that the rapist has caused the victim to be the victim, and the victim has caused the rapist to be the rapist. Be that as it may, causality is not responsibility. To say that somebody has caused another to be an offender does not necessarily mean that the victim is responsible for the offence. The victim's presence is necessary for the offence to take place, but the offender is the one who is responsible. Likewise, in the morally good act of charity, the giver and the one who is given have both caused each other's actions. A morally good or evil person is so because of the way s/he relates with the society and/or the environment.

When an individual does something wrong to another person, they are failing to acknowledge the connectivity of all in the society. The *Botho* perspective is therefore, similar to the so-called Golden rule, namely, "do unto others as you would have them do unto you". Wiredu (1996) similarly argues that, for a human society to qualify as a society there must be a standard principle of conduct. He terms it, "the principle of sympathetic impartiality" and argues that it may be expressed by the imperative, "let your conduct at all times manifest a due concern for others" (Wiredu 1996:29). For example, in Setswana, greetings are important, when people exchange greetings they tell each other about themselves and their belongings. When other people are not well, one would do whatever they can to help, including, giving them information on where to get help. This is what due concern for others entails.

A human person is perceived in terms of his or her relationship with the community, “I am because of other people” (Tutu 2004:25) means that other people define me and I define other people. My observation is that some fundamental features of Afro-communitarianism define, nurture and preserve the individual and the minority. Some of the Setswana practices like *mafisa*, which is discussed later in this chapter, demonstrate that the *Botho* perspective seeks to provide for all individuals, even when they are poor and lower in the social hierarchy. The *Botho* viewpoint demands that human persons acknowledge and pay deference to any other being which exhibits the characteristics of metaphysical personhood. Failure to treat a human person with dignity, simply because of dissention, is not *Botho*. Likewise, the oppression of other people based on their sex, race, tribe, nationality, religion, or age is contrary to the *Botho* perspective. If the community of black people discriminates against a white person, for instance, that community becomes a community of racists. The community has become in part because of its relationship with a white person. That is to say, the white person defines the community. Entertaining oneself, or a particular group of people at the expense of an individual or the minority, is against *Botho*, because the oppressor (or oppressors) behaves as if they have no relationship with the others. A morally good person, according to *Botho/Ubuntu* is welcoming, hospitable, warm, generous, and willing to share (Tutu 1997:39).

However, to uphold the value of the priority of community, does not necessarily deny an individual his or her own identity, potential or responsibility for his or her actions. It is practically impossible for individuals to always agree with the community. In a certain incident, several individuals are likely to disagree with the community, and on the next incident, they might side with the community, while a different set of individuals disagrees.

Similarly, it is impossible for the individual to be absolutely free, for s/he will sometimes compromise and at other times disobey. This is expected occasionally in the African community, without necessarily leading to the ostracisation of the individual in question. Otherwise, this would lead to the constant ostracisation of individuals, which entails a destabilisation of the community.

5.6.1 Morality in Politics

Batswana believe that *kgosi ke kgosi ka batho* (Mogapi 1985) or the chief is a chief because of his subjects. The chief rules with, because of and through other people, which is a recipe for his success. Even though one is born a chief, and into an office traditionally believed to be ordained by the ancestral spirits, one is expected to live up to communal expectations. Abuse of this birth right can bring it to an end. Batswana believe that *molao o sefofu, o tle o je mong wa one* (the law is blind, and can even eat its creator). In other words, no one is above the law. Another idiom says *molao tau o loma le mogokgo* (the law is a lion; it bites the great man too).

The chief cannot justly work for his own happiness at the expense of the community's happiness. That is, because according to the *Botho* perspective, no one is inherently more important than the other; no one can claim that his or her happiness or unhappiness counted more than the happiness or unhappiness of the average person. The missionary, Robert Moffat, observed the democratic nature of Tswana chieftaincy, whereby subjects were not obliged to accord the chief prejudiced deference. Moffat says that this was not the tyranny that is often associated with other *Bantu* chiefs (1842:248-249). Thus, the *Botho* perspective has similarities with democracy in respect of freedom of speech and consultation.

Nonetheless, this study holds that the *Botho* perspective does not only acknowledge the majority but also esteems the individual, the minority and the poor in the society.

5.6.2 Freedom in Politics

The *Botho* perspective does not deny an individual expression as a free being. In Setswana, an individual person is seen as having an intrinsic value, and must therefore, be given honour due to a human person (Dube et. al. 2016). Batswana's traditional politics is a politics of consensus, which originates from a respect for all human persons and their right to air their opinions. The opposition is always invited to freedom of speech through the sayings, *mmualebe o bua la gagwe gore mona lentle a tswa la gagwe* (the one who says a bad word says his/her own word so that the one with a good word can say it) meaning that every person has the right to express their views, and *mafoko a kgotla a mantle otlhe* (all words spoken at the public gathering are valuable). Every individual is worthy of respect, and should be allowed to say what they have in mind. It is against *Botho* to suppress an opinion, which the majority does not approve of because the suppressed opinion may have substance. Freedom of thought and feeling presupposes the ability to reason as an integral part of every rational being, and the possibility for disseminating information. Another saying which expresses freedom of speech is *kgosi thotobolo o olela matlakala otlhe* (Mogapi 1985; the chief is a dumping site and must allow all rubbish). This means that the chief has the obligation to listen to, and assess everything that is presented to him. If it is false or foolish, it will be corrected at the public gathering through an open discussion.

However, freedom does not include rebellion, disrespect, scorn and abusive remarks.

Individuals are advised to guard against negative words through the saying, *motho o tshwarwa ka leleme, kgomo e tshwarwa ka kgole* (a human person is trapped by his or her tongue while a cow is trapped with a rope) and *lefoko ga le bowe go bowa monwana* (a

spoken word cannot be reversed, but an accusing finger can be folded back). An interpretation of the above sayings is that communication impacts on the well-being of the speaker and the listeners. Somebody who behaves according to *Botho*, speaks the truth, and can restrain him/herself from destructive talk. When one loses temper in public, for example, one will be advised to be in control of one's emotions through a saying, *pelo potsane, e a golegwa* (a heart is a kid, it must be tied securely; Mogapi 1985). In this instance the heart refers to a temper—when you are angry (*o betilwe ke pelo*) you have to restrain yourself. If you do not secure kids they can go astray—small kids can follow anything—dogs, people etc and get lost in the process.

5.6.3 Morality and Dignity

A helpful basic description of dignity can be found in the *World Book Dictionary*, which defines dignity as “the quality of character or ability that wins respect and a high opinion of others” (Barnhart and Barnhart 1990:587). Scholars are divided on how to categorise dignity, whether ethically, metaphysically, or both. The African worldview, however, recognises and embraces both an innate metaphysical, and a socially acquired moral, dignity. Austin Mbozi's view of dignity is similar to this perception where he espouses a belief in, firstly, an “inherent dignity that derives from our rationality” and secondly, “harmonious relations” (unpublished work: page 7).

On the metaphysical side of the debate, Gabriel Setiloane, who studied Batswana religious ideas, defines *seriti* (dignity) as:

A physical phenomenon, which expresses itself externally to the human body in a dynamic manner. It is like an aura around the human person, an invisible shadow, or a cloud, or mist forming something like a magnetic or radar field (1976:13).

Metz (2011) also understands human dignity in inherent terms, but relationally and not in terms of life-force, as exemplified by the following statement:

a human being has dignity in virtue of his capacity for community or friendship, conceived as the combination of identity and solidarity, where to identify with others is to share a way of life with them and to exhibit solidarity with others is to care about their quality of life (2011:544).

According to Metz, a human person has an innate capacity for relationships, whether s/he actualises this capacity or not. Metz argues that a human person always carries his or her own dignity, even if for some reason s/he happens to be in solitude, for instance in prison. Even though Metz differs with the *Botho* perspective by ruling out the spiritual aspect of personhood which *Botho* recognises, both perspectives acknowledge the inherent worth of an individual person. For Metz there is no inconsistency between the individual and the community.

This perspective coincides with that of *Botho*, because *Botho* recognises that human persons are naturally oriented towards each other. Nonetheless, it is the position of this thesis that scholars of Afro-communitarianism have been rather extreme when attaching relationality to personhood. Thus, while some, like Polycarp Ikuenobe (2016), would say that an individual has no dignity unless s/he has acted morally or communally, a *Botho* interpretation of personhood states that individual persons have a metaphysical dignity which accompanies being human, be they young, old, moral, amoral, intelligent or insane. Dignity is both metaphysical and moral, it is both innate and acquired. In the Setswana perspective, the human remains must be handled with care because they carry human dignity. A human

person has dignity from birth, and it is never lost. A person is a person because of, with and through others irrespective of their status.

The *Botho* perspective provides the standard for how a human person ought and/or ought not to be treated. On one hand the human person has inherent dignity as long as s/he possess the immaterial aspect even if s/he does not actualize the capacity to enter into a moral relationship with other people. For example people who are in solitude, for instance prison. On the other hand the human person has a greater acquired dignity when they actually enter into relationships with other people. Thus, what grounds the two kind of dignity for *Botho* is the immateriality of human communal nature and moral relationship with other people.

According to the *Botho* view, a human person is not only dignified because of his or her capacity for interconnectedness with fellow human persons, but also for actualising that capacity. Ikuenobe (2016:460) insists that “...respect by others is not something that one who is capable of morality ‘has inherently,’ but is something earned and deserved based on the active and positive use of one’s capacity for moral excellence or superior achievements.” Ikuenobe incorrectly rejects inherent dignity, but is right to note another sort that is acquired.

Interconnectedness within *Botho* can be contrasted with the Kantian conception of dignity which narrows inherent human dignity to the capacity for rational agency (Kant 1991). In view of the *Botho* perspective, each human person has a role to play, which will ideally bring solidarity to the community, while also maintaining the individual’s rights and dignity that she has as a relational being. Dwight Hopkins (2005) is in agreement with the *Botho* perspective when he posits that solidarity gives rise to reciprocity amongst people. He explains that the full majority realises itself, when each member of the collective participates

in reciprocity. For each person to reach the fullness of the self there must be a mutual interacting process. Hopkins elaborates that each member must be alert because his or her actions contribute either growth or reduction to the life of the entire community or its own individual life. Likewise, for John de Gruchy (2006:36), “sharing a common humanity binds people together rather than separates them”. In this context, denying the humanity of others inevitably leads to the reduction of one’s own acquired dignity. That means dehumanising others dehumanises oneself.

An example of perceiving the personal dignity of a victim is when a misfortune or death occurs to an individual; the whole community mourns. This mindset helps to prevent divisions and categorisations but encourages solidarity and respect among fellow members of the community. An individual who does this seamlessly is normally given greater acquired dignity than one who does not, with varying degrees of dignity granted according to the level of ability to contribute to communitarianism. In the African context, the individual “... took care of the community and the community took care of him/her; when s/he suffered, s/he suffered with the community” (Matolino 2008:124). There is a sense of selflessness and concern for the well-being of fellow society members.

In a communitarian society, there are moral virtues of love and compassion, which acknowledge and uphold the dignity of each individual, especially the disadvantaged. Some of the important traditional practices in the Botswana society are *majako*, *mafisa*, *go tshwaela* and work parties. *Majako* is when someone who has not ploughed their own field works on the field of the one who has ploughed. The person who has ploughed then gives the one who has not ploughed a portion of the harvest as an appreciation of the work done. *Mafisa* is when those who have more cattle loan some to those without for their everyday use, such as

milking and using them for draught power. The borrower temporarily cares for the cattle like they were his own until he acquires his. A cattle owner often pays his or her herdsman through *go tshwaela*, to mark and set apart a heifer as a gift (Schapera 1955:217). These practices restore dignity by raising the living standards of the underprivileged.. The other example of a *Botho* cultural practice is work parties, viz., *Letsema* or *Molaletsa*. When, for example, someone is building a house, clearing bushes in their field or harvesting, they would cook a lot of food, brew traditional beer, and would request neighbours to assist with the work as well as invite them to the feast. The people help each other not because they need a meal, but because of charity, and the goal of upholding the dignity of their neighbour. From this viewpoint, Vuyani Vellem aptly sums up the African notion of dignity by saying that: “...dignity [...] should be sought in the interconnectedness of humans” (2010:314).

The interconnectedness of human persons is also identifiable in Setswana proverbs like *molomo fa o ja o roga o mongwe* (when a mouth eats, it insults the other mouths) (Mmualefhe 2007). This means that it is not right to eat when others are watching with nothing to eat/ to enjoy privileges that others are not enjoying. Another Setswana proverb that Mmualefhe quotes is *bana ba motho ba kgaogana tlhogwana ya tsie* (siblings share the head of a locust) which means that even if you have as little food as the head of a locust, you must share it. Communal efforts to help each other are based on the belief that *mabogo dinku a a thebana* and *sedikwa ke ntsa pedi ga se thata* (Mogapi 1985). These sayings are similar to the English saying, “many hands make light work”. Helping each other seeks to maintain the dignity of each person in the society.

5.6.4 Non-human Things and Human Persons

It is commonly held among most Africans including Batswana that human persons cannot survive without the rest of nature such as, land, animals, trees and vegetation, ancestral spirits, mountains, rivers, and others. According to the Setswana tradition, nature must be preserved because it is the source of food, shelter and other materials that make day to day human life possible. This perspective falls within Placide Tempels' (1959) exposition of the *Bantu* worldview of life forces, who explains that God made non-human forces for the purpose of serving human beings, in order to strengthen their human vital force. Thus, in the context of many Africans including Batswana, the benefits found in nature are good for the maintenance of human dignity.

Since non-person things support the life-force of human persons, based on the *Botho* viewpoint, the inherent worth of non-persons is low in quality as compared to that of human persons. Setswana has a proverb that says, *ga le fete motho le tlhaba kgomo* (a bullet ought to bypass a human person to stab a cow; Mogapi 1984:121). This means that, if a choice has to be made, something else must die in place of a human person. The life of a human person is considered priceless. According to the *Botho* perspective, it would be morally wrong, for a bullet to be directed at a human person. In accordance with the *Botho* standpoint, whilst the human person has moral obligations towards persons and non-persons, such obligations are more important towards persons than non-persons. The human person's moral obligations towards moral persons are correlated with human rights. The obligations towards non-persons are for natural balance. Batswana believe that murder can result in drought; this is because human persons are believed to be interconnected with nature as well as dependent on it. Divinity is also nature. The human person has some obligations to future generations, so they must preserve nature such as land.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the moral or social and ethical aspect of *Botho*. The moral aspect of the *Botho* perspective is largely concerned with social relations between members of the community. It involves the normative issue of how to treat people, and moral responsibility, that is how an agent should decide. This chapter has also discussed examples of what morality requires, as well as the human dignity from the *Botho* perspective. It discussed two senses of dignity, namely, dignity as inherent in human beings and dignity as acquired by them. The next chapters evaluate the impact of biotechnological enhancements on freewill.

Chapter 6: The Impact of Enhancements on Freewill

6.1 Introduction

The preceding two chapters laid out the *Botho* perspective, which serves as the analytical tool in the present chapter, and the subsequent ones (chapters 7 and 8). In the present chapter, the metaphysical aspect of *Botho* tackles the question of whether or not transhumanism would impair free-will or even enhance it. Of the three chapters on *Botho*, chapter 3 dealt with the metaphysical aspects of *Botho*, chapter 4 covered epistemological aspect and chapter 5 covered the moral/ethical aspects, and ideas from these three chapters are relevant to free-will issues. Chapters 7 and 8 are functionally similar to this sixth chapter in that they continue the analysis of hypothetical enhanced persons using the *Botho* tool. This chapter, deals with determinism and freewill and leaves the discussion of other major ontological aspects of human beings and personhood to chapters 7 and 8.

The current and next chapters demonstrate that modest biotechnological enhancements are consistent with metaphysical aspects of the *Botho* perspective.¹⁰ However, it argues that extreme degrees or kinds of transhumanism or enhancement, whose ultimate goal is a new species, will be inconsistent with the metaphysical aspect of the *Botho* perspective in terms of remaining a human.

It has been observed that scholars, who discuss the human person in the context of Afro-communitarianism, tend to give inadequate attention to the metaphysical perspective of personhood in favour of the moral and relational understanding. Scholars who bring the

¹⁰ The data on enhancements and transhumanism, to which I will apply the *Botho* worldview, was presented in chapter 2, with greater emphasis on gene and cybernetic enhancements.

African communitarian mindset into the personhood debate generally identify the individual person as non-autonomous. In contrast, the third chapter of this thesis demonstrated comprehensively that, in the *Botho* perspective, the individual person also exists as a metaphysically autonomous entity. The present chapter also contributes new knowledge by applying a prominent metaphysical orientation within the *Botho* worldview, particularly its discussion of determinism and freedom, to debate about enhancements.

As previously mentioned in the first chapter, many African scholars address transhumanism in the normative aspect of African personhood. For example, Fayemi (2018) deals with transhumanism and personhood in a Yoruba African context. Du Toit (2005) explores the possible benefits of Africans being transhumanists. These scholars, however, do not discuss transhumanism in the context of freewill. This study differs from theirs, in that it thoroughly addresses the issue of freewill, as one of the metaphysical aspects of personhood, not merely the ethical considerations. Thus, this study discusses freewill in the context of transhumanism. Such an enquiry has not been undertaken before by scholars working in the African philosophical tradition.

In the discussions, the human person is physically determined by genetic inheritance, physical living conditions, and socialization with family and society, but still possesses freewill. This section argues that some forms of transhumanism could improve freewill while other forms could limit freewill.

The reader is to recall that, from chapter 3 that, for *Botho*, freewill is constituted by action taken upon rational reflection. Therefore, this chapter argues that some forms of transhumanism like cognitive enhancement could improve freewill. Antonio Dieguez and

Carissa Veliz (2017:3) have argued that moral enhancement does not limit freedom. Their central argument is that if a morally educated person is not less free than an evildoer, there is no reason to suppose that a biotechnologically enhanced individual would be less free. In contrast, this thesis uses the *Botho* approach to explain that freedom means that, in theory, one can do both good and evil, but is able to avoid the undesirable. Therefore, the removal of evil means, the enhanced person would be less free; however, s/he would still be free because freewill exists in degrees. Thus, enhancement could limit free-will, although it would not necessarily eliminate it completely.

The metaphysical topics discussed in this chapter are embedded within the following hypothetical enhancements: gene enhancement, cybernetic enhancement and cognitive enhancement. Other kinds of enhancement are also discussed, but in less detail; mind uploading is a good example. There are varying degrees of possible application of these enhancements. This study will conclude that, whereas moderate applications of the enhancements are consistent with *Botho*, in terms of remaining human, some radical forms are consistent with *Botho*, in terms of a being remaining a person. This chapter illustrates that some enhancements could improve freewill.

The first section of this chapter, discusses the ontological aspect of personhood, namely, determinism and freewill (Section 6.2). It discusses freewill issues in transhumanism and the *Botho* compatibilist approach to freewill in the first subsection (6.2.1). The next sub section (6.2.2), discusses personhood as a process. It explains that according to both the *Botho* perspective and transhumanism, personhood is not fixed but is boundless, which implies freewill. Section (6.2.3), discusses the concept of destiny in an African perspective and how it

relates to the issues of freewill. Section (6.2.4), expounds the implications of biotechnological enhancement on freewill from the *Botho* perspective.

6.2 Determinism and Freewill (Ontology)

This topic has already been discussed from the perspective of *Botho* in the third chapter, so this section alludes to the findings. This section demonstrates that deterministic or mechanical processes in the brain, which would be enhanced biotechnologically in a transhuman, would not necessarily result in the lack of freewill. Thereafter, it exhibits that soft determinism is the default sort of freewill that we have. It further illustrates that the *Botho* standpoint and transhumanism attest to soft-determinism, and not hard determinism. This study therefore holds that, according to the *Botho* perspective, there would be determinism and free-will, each to a certain degree, in both un-enhanced and hypothetically enhanced human beings. From this viewpoint, human beings are free in accordance with reason, which is a determined process. It also shows that the understanding of destiny according to the *Botho* perspective allows room for the human person to exercise freewill. Therefore, human persons are morally responsible for their actions. This thesis supports the claim that all human behaviour is caused, but the human persons are still free. This chapter, argues that moderately enhanced human persons would remain free to choose, based on their rational deliberations. Moderate enhancement is, therefore, not detrimental to human freewill.¹¹

¹¹ Only the radical types and/or some done to an extreme measure would undermine freedom, as discussed in the section “Limited Freewill Due to Radical Biotechnological Enhancement”.

6.3 Freewill and Determinism in the *Botho* and Transhumanist Framework

This subsection, displays that, in the study's *Botho* and transhumanist framework, there is no freewill–determinism dilemma or incompatibility. The *Botho* perspective has both elements of freewill and determinism. The human person could be determined by genetic inheritance, living conditions, socialisation, spiritual influences and physical events. The Setswana saying, *motho ke motho ka batho ba bangwe* could mean “I am because of my parents”. That is to say, parents have produced me biologically, psychologically and socially. I may be fat because of the genes I inherited from my parents, and I may be sick because of the genes I inherited from my parents. Similarly, whenever I do good or evil, my parents will be praised or blamed. The genes, the society and even the environment have a role to play in an individual's becoming a person.

Botho subscribes to soft determinism. The fact that personhood is a process, according to the *Botho* perspective, can imply freewill. The individual is free, responsible, and mandated to construct an ideal personhood (see chapter 5 section 5.4). The human person is free because s/he can govern himself/herself with his or her reasons. According to the *Botho* perspective, a human person is a being who, because of rational capacity, can relate. This makes him/her free. The *Botho* viewpoint holds that human persons are morally responsible for their behaviour. An individual is free to make deliberate choices of action. Being good or bad therefore depends on the self, the relationship with other people and the individual's use of the environment. The practice of holding people responsible for decisions, actions, and habits rests on the premise that they have freewill.

The extent of freewill is not fixed, Walter Glannon (2012:337) elaborates on this view by saying that “freewill can come in degrees, depending on the extent to which we control the

mental states that issue in our actions. Because causal determinism does not entail constraint, coercion, or compulsion, freewill is compatible with causal determinism.” Thus, a human person can be determined and be partly free to various extents or be determined and completely constrained, this is soft determinism. Hard determinism, however, holds that the human person is not free because his or her actions are a result of deterministic or mechanistic processes in the brain, whether conscious or unconscious (Glannon 2012). There is nothing inherent to transhumanism that rules out soft determinism, which is why some transhumanists usually describe the human person in soft deterministic terms. According to them, because human action is determined by brain events, the process is intrinsic by default, so that we can generally argue that there is no constraint, coercion or compulsion; which means that the person is free (Glannon 2012). Therefore, according to transhumanism, enhancements would not necessarily limit human freewill. When considering the *Botho* framework, based on the intrinsic nature of mental processes, we also consider such a person to fit well the traits of human personhood and thus to remain a *motho*.

6.4 Implications of Enhancement to Freewill

This section, discusses the implications of biotechnological enhancement to freewill and argue that biotechnological enhancement as such, would not necessarily limit freewill, but radical enhancement could. The section also contends that some forms of transhumanism could improve freewill.

6.4.1 Improved Freewill Due to Enhancement

In this section I show that biotechnological enhancement could indeed improve freewill. Nick Bostrom (2008:107) discusses improvements in cognition as referring to the improvement of general intellectual capacities such as memory, deductive and analogical reasoning, also

attention span. These improvements might be achieved through nanotechnology and gene enhancement. According to Allen Buchanan et. al. (2009:6), gene intervention can be done by introducing particular genes into the body cells of an individual, into germline cells (sperm cells, egg cells or embryos) or through a process in which abnormal or undesirable genes are “switched off” – that is, deactivated so that they no longer produce their distinctive effects. Gene enhancement could be used to improve cognition, and genes that regulate intelligence could be manipulated to work better. In reference to nano technology, Ray Kurzweil (2003) discusses possibilities of controlling human biological systems at the molecular level to improve human functioning. An example would be the introduction of prosthesis in the human body which would surpass the original biological mechanism. Since these enhancements would be applied to any human capability or function, they may be used to improve focus and memory among students or ageing people. For instance, tiny computers would be interfaced with the brain to speed up the processing of information, to increase memory, and to improve problem solving skills. Where knowledge and all relevant information are processed, choice is being made from an informed position. An enhanced individual would be free insofar as s/he possessed advanced knowledge about the contents of the choices s/he chooses. The improvement in cognition implies the improvement in knowledge. Knowledge capability influences freewill. That way, by advancing cognition, enhancement would also advance a human person’s freedom. The advanced human person would be freer than his or her unenhanced version since the boundaries of what he could do, would be extended. John Harris (2007:15) also says that human persons are the product of a natural germline-altering process called evolution, which has changed and continues to change their nature. For that reason, Harris advocates for a quicker evolution, arguing that, instead of chance, human persons should be masters of their genetic endowments, be in charge of their evolution and accelerate progress. He gives an example of a human person

learning something new. He argues that every time the human person learns something new s/he changes connections, and form in the brain which physically change its structure. These changes improve human cognitive function. In regard to destiny, acquiring mystical knowledge would help individuals to realize their destiny. As already mentioned, knowledge acquisition could improve freewill. An individual who is well informed would choose appropriate actions to fulfil his or her destiny. For example, s/he could choose to alter their success in life; find possible solutions to the problems in life, which may hinder him/her from fulfilling his or her destiny. S/he could also utilise spiritual forces to control the powers of the world to his or her will. These actions presuppose freewill; an individual in this case is directing his own destiny.

6.4.2 Unlimited Freewill Despite Enhancement

Biotechnological enhancement does not necessarily limit freewill because according to transhumanism and the *Botho* outlook, personhood is not static (see chapter 5 section 5.4). For both perspectives, personhood is externally caused, but does not end at that causal level; personhood continues to be shaped additionally through the individual's contribution until they die. Genetic enhancement, for instance, does not necessarily result in a lack of the sort of freewill that *Botho* seeks in a human. For example, attempting to modify the human genome would not violate human freewill. If genetically enhanced people were essentially not free, we would have to ask; what makes a human person whose genotype has been produced by biotechnological enhancements different from a person whose genotype has been produced by nature? Yet we know that the genotypes could be the same.

According to Amanda Sebastienne Grant (2019), potentiality plays a central role in transhumanism. Grant argues that biological limits are barriers to human potential and that

through the use of reason and other capacities, the human person can overcome these limits. As seen in chapter 5, the *Botho* standpoint says personhood is a process. The Setswana saying, *ga se motho* (s/he is not a person) suggests that personhood has degrees. A human person with a moral deficit is metaphysically a person, though of poorer quality, which can be improved. Similarly, a child's morality is not yet fully developed, so s/he can become better over time. Therefore, the human person possesses the capacity to transform him or herself in a way that earns him or her moral credit.

Nick Bostrom (2005c:211), holds that “what we are, is not a function solely of our DNA, but also of our technological and social context. Human nature in this broad sense is dynamic, partially human-made, and improvable”. David Resnik (2012:8) similarly contends that “... human beings are members of a species (*Homo sapiens*) that has evolved over time and will continue to evolve”. The fact that human nature is not static weakens the dichotomy of “natural” versus “unnatural” because our “given genome” changes over a lifetime. This brings to mind the natural process of evolution, although evolution is much slower. Thus, Grant (2019:6) contends that “... we cannot choose whether or not to manifest our potential to transcend humanity because it is inevitable, but we as individuals, can choose whether or not to utilize transhuman technologies once they exist”.

In the same way, genotypical changes do not necessarily curtail individual freewill only because they are administered artificially. In fact, one can argue that the natural evolution of human beings has been very radical. If the freedom and rationalisation of the individual, of, for example, two thousand years ago, were contrasted with those of today, such a person would most probably consider today's person a posthuman in contrast to him or herself. In other words, it is likely that the advances that the transhumanists' hypothesis suggests are no

more radical than what evolution has already done or at least could do. Evolution only took much longer and will still take much longer to have the same positive effect on the human person that is proposed by transhumanistic changes.

This study is of the view that, for *Botho*, the human person is free by virtue of his or her being rational. In respect of transhumanism, therefore, if the human-machine is rational, it is also free. If a genetically enhanced human person can still think and act consequent to her thinking, then s/he is free. Thinking is a mental activity; the human person is conscious of this mental process, and can choose his or her reasoning as well as how to act in light of it. This is what makes him/her free.

On a trivial note, this could be assuring to critics, that there are scientific and technical limitations to genetic manipulation, which would constrain any enhancement procedure from crossing over to radicalness. Resnik (2012:8) says that "... technological limitations will make it difficult for parents to have absolute control over their children's traits for the foreseeable future. A parent might be able to increase a child's natural abilities only marginally, if at all". This kind of modest advancement is amicable to the *Botho* perspective.

This study demonstrates how different types of biotechnological enhancements could alter the brain state. For instance, using cognitive enhancement, may change the way the human person thinks, and may affect his or her moral decision-making; but the human person would remain free. If we suppose that cognitive enhancement increases reasoning and creativity, yet affects memory, we would still see that the individual's decision-making effort is exerted on choosing the best option. There is a better chance of them remembering given their enhancement than the original unenhanced state. The *Botho* perspective argues that the

human person is free because s/he is rational. If our thoughts are a result of impersonal, irrational causes, they cannot be considered free. A fitting example is an automata or robot. The behaviour of such robots is predictable, while human behaviour is unpredictable. Human persons can predict and influence what that robot could do, it is not a person that could make decisions. Human persons, in contrast, are free to deliberate, choose and act. Human persons are not spectators of their behaviour; they organise their thoughts and reflect. However, robots are so far not conscious or capable of performing intentional actions. Thus, choice and deliberation enable an individual to change their course of action or their minds, which is not the case with the robot, that is why the latter is predictable.

Enhancing people without their consent would be morally wrong because it would take away their freedom on a particular occasion (physical and mental ability to exercise their freewill), but it would not take away their general freewill (ability to process information and make their own decisions). Therefore, it would limit their freedom of action (that is, the decision to or not to be enhanced) but not their freedom of will.

Walter Glannon (2012:335-336) observes that human-machine interfaces and psychotropic drugs can alter the human physical and psychological properties and radically change the way the human person chooses and acts. As noted above in reference to evolution, the genomes of an individual person change naturally over a lifetime, and mechanical processes are affected by natural changes. Biotechnological enhancements would do the same, whether quickly, slowly, radically or modestly, depending on the enhancement and/or its degree of application. In that regard, altering the brain of the human person could artificially affect the way s/he chooses and acts, rather than the familiar natural changes that most human beings prefer. However, this need not take away, but could restrain to an extent, the person's freewill

and ability to choose. Hence, the argument is that brain alteration does not automatically result in lack of freewill. Nature itself and social nurture offer no more guarantees of mental stability than biotechnological enhancements.

Regarding destiny, through the use of some enhancements, individuals could be free to either realise or fulfil their destiny. In African traditions, including Setswana, it is believed that an individual may be sent back to the earthly realm to fulfil his or her destiny through the body of a newborn. This African belief can be likened to mind uploading or transferring a human mind into a different substrate. Such an individual would choose to live a longer life, and would be free to fulfil his or her destiny without being limited by bodily death.

Another example of enhancement is where nano-robots (nanobots) could be introduced into the human organism, as devices that monitor and repair damaged cells and tissues hence, reversing cellular degeneration (see chapter 2). This enhancement would contribute to a long life. A longer life in the African perspective suggests that an individual could qualify as an ancestor. Such an individual would be able to attain a respected position in the community, have children, and live to an old age. Edwin Smith (1950:111) reiterates this idea when he explains that “in the spirit world, the hierarchy of age and authority is similarly respected. Requests are made to the invisible father and he forwards the message to the next above him, unless a specific ancestor is demanding attention”.

Further, in the Tswana traditional religion, the oldest member of the family is at times regarded as ancestor by the junior members of the family, since the aged are believed to have

access to the ancestral spirit by virtue of their position (Byaruhanga-Akiiki 1985). Therefore, this enhancement could help an individual to fulfil his or her life's destiny in this life.

Other types of enhancement could help individuals acquire mystical knowledge. These will be discussed under section 7.3.2). Gene enhancement could be utilized to improve morality or good behaviour in individuals. The good behaviour could be necessary to fulfill specific societal roles and functions as well as fulfilling one's destiny as a good or full person. In the African society, to become an ancestor one must possess integrity and morality.

6.4.3 Limited Freewill Due to Radical Enhancement

Some biotechnological enhancements, by their nature, could limit freewill, while others would limit it only if they were done with an excessive measure, or to a radical level, as some extreme posthumanists desire. Nonetheless, this study observed that outrage raised about enhancement primarily emanates from fear of the speed of change, that the human person would be capable of, rather than the loss of freewill. The speed would be observable but claims of loss of freewill would be hard to support. The study holds that moderate biotechnological enhancements would not necessarily take away freewill, although they could affect morality and identity.

Cybernetic enhancement could substantially alter mental states. For instance, cognitive augmentation may interfere with information processing in executive brain functions such as reasoning and decision-making. Enhancements which result in an individual devoid of thinking, but acting according to other deterministic processes would eliminate freewill. For instance, if nanotechnology could create robots, that would take over human decision-making.

The human person develops freedom independently, but robots are programmed. Robots may not change their minds and they may be predictable, but human persons can change their minds, hence the Setswana saying *motho ga a itsewe e se naga* (unlike land, country, forest, a human person is unknowable). The meaning of this Setswana saying is that the human person is unpredictable. According to the *Botho* perspective, conscience is the inner quality central to making moral decisions. Freedom according to the *Botho* viewpoint is tied to reasoning or consciousness, without this consciousness, a person cannot be free. Therefore, we can attribute freewill to conscious beings only.

According to Mark Coeckelbergh (2013:109), posthumans, just like human persons, would be vulnerable and susceptible to the influence of their environment and the interactions between each other, but some posthumans would not be self-conscious like humans are. He explains that such posthumans' vulnerability would be different from humans; those posthumans would not have an existential vulnerability, but an "essential" or "objective" one.

Coeckelbergh (2013:110) elaborates on this by pointing out that some posthuman "in contrast to a human, would not be aware of these relations and would not be self-aware: it would be related to the world, but would not consciously and actively relate to the world". Posthumans who are not conscious could be likened to puppets. In defining a puppet Cowburn (2008:196), explains that:

A puppet is moved this way and that by a conscious agent, who imposes his or her plans on the puppet from above or below, whereas according to determinism most of the time our actions are determined by our natures and our experience, not by conscious agents distinct from us.

In contrast human persons can perform intentional actions. Thus, in the *Botho* view, the radically enhanced person – a puppet – would lack freewill.

Another form of enhancement is mind uploading. In mind uploading, a conscious mind is uploaded into a computer structure and stimulated. In this way, the levels of the physiological or nervous activity are raised. The mind is not necessarily enhanced, but it is primarily stored in a different medium. Since consciousness is the brain's physical activity, it can be stimulated physically. It is probably possible to produce consciousness through computerisation (Bostrom 2003:17). If consciousness that was aroused through computerisation in an uploaded mind, influenced neurons in the brain, the uploaded person would be free. However, if such consciousness did not initiate actions, freewill would not exist in such a setting, and the enhancement would be against the *Botho* perspective. This would plausibly be described as a case where the person survives, but is no longer a human being and lacks the ability to act freely.

Mind uploading is an example where rational capacity could be rendered static, rather than evolving as expected over the days, weeks, months or years that would lapse between updates. For example, an uploaded person would no longer be able to go shopping on his or her own, play ball games or make new friends with unenhanced humans, because his or her body material, looks and functions would be incompatible with theirs. S/he could be a computer box that mostly sits on a desk or could have a robotic body that would limit his or her experiences. This would drastically limit his or her freewill, though it would not completely take it away, in so far as one mental act of deliberation could cause another one.

Judging from the discussion above on mind uploading, the material brain does not oppose freewill, but is also not essential for it either. Still, the immaterial aspect of personhood does

not oppose freewill. Based on the *Botho* outlook, there are no dichotomies between spiritual and physical realities. The fact that the spirit survives physical death does not imply that the two aspects are opposed to each other; it means they are functionally different. In such a scenario, opposition of freewill does not occur for either the material or immaterial aspect as such. In contrast to Descartes' dualism, *Botho* comprises a holistic approach to personhood – not a partitioning of the whole into two separate parts. As has already been stated (chapter 3), according to the Setswana understanding of destiny, there is interdependence between the physical and spiritual worlds. For example, a person can pour his or her drink or food on the ground in a ritual to feed the ancestors. The ancestors are immaterial whilst the food is material, but both the food and the ancestors are not opposed to each other. Therefore, human freewill is not necessarily affected by either the material or immaterial state. Since there is no separation between the material world and the spiritual world, if the material world is determined and free, we could say the same thing about the spiritual world. The human person is determined by the spiritual powers but is still free because s/he is able to change his or her life events through appealing to spiritual powers.

Dieguez and Veliz (2017) argue that even if people were transformed into moral angels, the possibility of falling morally would not disappear. They explain that only moral automata would destroy human capacity to choose freely. A scenario where an enhanced human becomes a moral automaton is where the human person no longer deliberates. If a person has a good habit through which he responds to a certain provocation, he has to deliberate hard in order to respond that way. According to the *Botho* perspective, deliberation is not only important but is required for individuals to deserve praise or blame. Habit comes because of training, and any action from habit is free in so far as it is a result of training, but not free if it is accidental or unprocessed.

According to Dieguez and Veliz (2017:4), for a cognitive enhancement, brain stimulation could counter-act impulsive and unconscious biased attitudes in order to produce better cognitive control of the individual's responses. They further argue that people who are morally good and always try to do what is regarded as right are not necessarily less free than immoral people (*ibid*). They are not necessarily freer either. There is no credible explanation for judging a morally enhanced person to be not free, or less free than a virtuous person who is not morally enhanced. They give the example of moral education and argue that it is an innovation that contributes to moral enhancement, and moral education must not be said to take away human freewill on the basis of that effort. Furthermore, it does not follow that moral enhancement would lead to diminished options; rather, improvement in reasoning would result in new and more options (2017:6).

This study departs slightly from Dieguez and Veliz views, however, by holding that if one were enhanced never to be able to choose evil, s/he would be less free; however, s/he would still be free –since freewill exists in degrees. S/he may be free as regards choosing good, but the fact that evil has been removed from his or her options makes him/her less free. This is supported by Cowburn (2008:18), who states that “... a free act is different from both determined and random events. The multiplicity of possibilities makes it different from a predetermined event, and the conscious choice makes it different from a random event”. He goes further to explain that multiple possibilities do not mean equal moral goodness, reasonableness or attractiveness of all possibilities. He explains that human persons are not always necessarily morally good; it is possible for a human person to see clearly that an attitude or action would be immoral, and nevertheless, still choose it. Unlike Dieguez's and Veliz's arguments, therefore, Cowburn's position means that to remove evil from the

possibilities would make the enhanced less free. Likewise, this thesis argues that the person would remain free but in a smaller degree as regards some areas of morality.

Furthermore, according to *Botho*, freedom is relative, which means it comes in degrees. Knowledge capabilities and other things influence freedom. Even if we removed evil from the options, a human being would still have the freedom to choose from the degrees of good. For example, to resolve a conflict, an enhanced innocent party could choose from the following options: to be silent; vocally accept fault; accept fault and apologies; accept fault, apologies and offer a hug or; accept fault, apologies, give a hug and buy a gift. The possible options do not end at buying a gift but are infinite, which further amplifies the individual's freedom of choice. Similarly, an improvement in reasoning would result in increasing options. The agent is still deserving of praise. Even if the degree of application were to be radical, it would still not completely impair freedom. The features it could impair are the moral quality of decisions and behaviour as well as the person's identity.

As an illustration, alcohol can temporarily tamper with one's rationality, while biological enhancements would do it more permanently; also, alcohol has uncontrollable side effects on the mind and body while hypothetical enhancements would not be uncontrollable.

Consumers of alcohol sometimes say that it improves their mood. Nonetheless, when alcohol slows down cognitive processes and leads to inappropriate social interaction, this behaviour is morally wrong according to the *Botho* perspective, even though the individual is still free.

What makes this individual free is his or her ability to deliberate, even if that ability is imperfect.¹²

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that modest biotechnological enhancements are consistent with metaphysical aspects of the *Botho* perspective in regard to freewill. The chapter explored both the radical and modest forms of enhancements in order to explore contrasts between them as well as to identify those that are consistent with *Botho* in terms of freewill. It has shown that according to the *Botho* perspective, there would be determinism and freewill, to a certain degree in both un-enhanced and hypothetically enhanced human beings. Thus, freewill is maintained in some types and degrees of biotechnological enhancement, specifically those that maintain or enhance reasoning and the ability to act, however, it is lost in those that impair these capacities. It can therefore, be concluded that gene enhancement and cybernetic enhancement, among other kinds of enhancements, are consistent with *Botho* in terms of freewill. This is, especially, when the goal is not to create a different species that would lack self-awareness, deliberation, or choice. The chapter has revealed that some enhancement could improve freewill while others could limit it. It has also established that some enhancements could be used to help individuals to realise and fulfil their destiny.

¹² My use of alcohol for illustration takes advantage of the fact that everyone has probably witnessed the effects of alcohol on cognition, but the example falls short of enhancement in the sense that the effects are more disadvantageous than those of a hypothesized enhancement.

This chapter is restricted to issues of freewill. It left other major ontological aspects of personhood to chapters 7 and 8. Therefore, the next two chapters undertake a similar function to that of this chapter. Chapter 7 continues the analysis of hypothetical enhancement, focusing on the material and immaterial aspect of the human person and human knowledge.

Chapter 7: The Impact of Enhancements on the Material/Immaterial Aspects of the Human

7.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter advanced claims about the impact of biotechnological enhancements on freewill as understood from a *Botho* perspective. It dealt specifically with issues of freewill and determinism. The discussions showed that freewill can be affected by the material brain, but that freewill need not be lost, and could be enhanced, if the brain is enhanced. The present chapter is functionally similar to the preceding chapter, as it continues the analysis of human nature using the *Botho* standpoint articulated in earlier chapters. It examines the impact of biotechnological enhancement on other ontological components of humans, namely the material/immaterial aspect, human knowledge, and related dimensions of human nature. This chapter focuses only on what is involved in the aspect of being human. The discussions on what makes an individual a person, what constitutes a person's identity, and how transhumanism might bear on these aspects is discussed in the next chapter.

The chapter starts by discussing what constitutes human nature and the changes and effects that could be brought by enhancement on those aspects.

It maintains that, based on the *Botho* viewpoint, a “human being” is more than just a “person” because it includes elements like, a body. As already mentioned in chapter 3, the human body is a distinct human feature, without which a being cannot be human.

The chapter applies this metaphysical understanding of humanness to scenarios like uploading, where an individual may lack some aspects that constitute human nature. Thus, uploading the contents of a human brain into a computer would affect human nature so that

the enhanced individual could continue to exist as a person, but not as a human being. Many Western philosophers have addressed the issue of being human, and transhumanist debates have occasioned further reflection on that. I address this issue using the *Botho* perspective in the context of enhanced individuals. It is common amongst many Africans including Batswana that human persons are essentially material bodies and immateriality. My interpretation of this African perspective is that, whereas the material body ensures human survival, the immaterial aspect survives the death of the material body and continues to exist as a person. There is no consensus on what the posthuman would look like, and it admittedly could take a variety of forms. However, using the metaphysical perspective of *Botho* we can decide whether a posthuman is a human being, a non-human person or an automaton. Even if there is controversy about what is human and what is not human, or about whether something counts as posthuman, there are at least some clear cases that debaters would accept. Human nature, in accordance with the *Botho* perspective, is understood partly to include the material body. Supposing that the body is improved or replaced the individual could remain a human, but if the human body is discarded, the individual could be a non-human person.

For example, an individual who replaces half of his/her body with artificial material is probably still a human being. However, mind-uploads with consciousness and no particular human body at all are no longer human beings but could be persons, supposing that consciousness entails the immaterial aspect and relationality which constitute personhood in the *Botho* perspective. Thus, if a being that has been human now lacks a body, it could persist as non-human. However, it could remain human without consciousness if it has the material and immaterial aspects. Further, an unconscious programmable robot whose behaviour is fully determined by us is neither human nor person.

The following chapter concludes that modest biotechnological enhancements would be consistent with human nature, and that extreme degrees or kinds of transhumanism, whose ultimate goal is a new species, would be inconsistent with the *Botho* perspective in terms of remaining human. It also demonstrates that moderate biotechnological enhancements may bring changes to the material and immaterial aspects of the human being, but need not substantially affect these aspects. This is because the material aspect changes through time and the immaterial aspect is affected by those changes. It further demonstrates that radical changes to the body may substantially affect material and immaterial features, and ultimately lead to loss of humanity.

Regarding human knowledge, this chapter contends that according to the *Botho* outlook, knowledge and the source of knowledge come from the co-operation of both the material and immaterial aspects of human nature. It explains that the metaphysical intuition, and community in the *Botho* epistemology, applies to transhumanism and does not limit human knowledge. It also argues that some forms of transhumanism could improve human knowledge. It also shows cases where enhancement would threaten knowledge.

This chapter adds new knowledge to the literature on African philosophy by introducing transhumanism in the context of *Botho* metaphysics pertaining to human nature. Chapter 3 has highlighted key African scholars who discuss human nature in African context, namely, Gyekye (1987), Wiredu (1980), Gbadegesin (1998) and Gaie (2007). These scholars present different views of the number of constituent parts of a person. However, a point worthy to note is that they have a common understanding that an individual is made of both the spiritual and physical components. Whereas the physical body depicts human nature, the spiritual force depicts a metaphysical person (ancestor). Another scholar who discusses human nature

is Grivas Muchineripi Kayange (2021), who explains that most of the African studies support dualism, and partly a form of physicalism known as quasi-physicalism. However, this study's approach differs from the mentioned scholars because it discusses human nature in the context of transhumanism.

Scholars who discuss transhumanism in the African context are Fayemi (2018) and Chimakonam (2021). Fayemi examines the relationship between personhood and transhumanism in the African context. He argues that some transhumanist elements are embedded in African ontological conceptions of personhood. Chimakonam similarly examines the relationship between Afro-communitarian personhood, and transhumanism. She claims that technologised personhood is not compatible with Afro-communitarian personhood. Whereas Chimakonam discusses the impact of transhumanism on Afro-communitarian personhood, Fayemi discusses the transhumanist elements embedded in the metaphysical and normative aspects of African personhood. Both scholars suggest that transhumanism might have an impact on the African understanding of personhood. However, being human is not the same as being a person; therefore, human enhancement technologies might impact on an individual in either or both of two ways. Namely, whether an “enhanced” individual is still a human being and/or whether or not the individual is still a person. This study differs from Fayemi and Chimakonam's in that it thoroughly addresses the metaphysical aspects of personhood (in the following chapter), in addition to the immaterial and material/physical aspects, which constitute human nature from the *Botho* perspective. Such an enquiry has not been undertaken before by those working in the African philosophical tradition.

In addition, this study addresses the epistemological aspect of human nature and how transhumanism might bear on this aspect from the *Botho* perspective. Scholars who discuss African epistemology are Placide Tempels (1959), Leopold Senghor (1965), Innocent Onyewuenyi (1991), Christopher Anyanwu (1981), Ejikemeuwa Ndubisi (2014), Elijah John (2009) and Andrew Uduigwomen (2009). These scholars maintain that all races are gifted with a unique nature, and ways of knowing things; therefore, African epistemology is distinctive from Western epistemology (Udefi 2014:112). However, the approach of this thesis differs from the mentioned scholars because it discusses the African epistemology in the context of transhumanism. Such an enquiry has not yet been undertaken.

Section (7.2) discusses immaterial and material aspects of a human being. It explains that the human being, as determined by *Botho* perspective, is constituted by immaterial and material aspects while being a person is constituted by the immaterial aspect (and a further relational condition). It further explains that, according to standard interpretations of transhumanism, the human being is constituted by the material aspect and consciousness, while being a person is constituted by consciousness alone. The section also discusses natural monism as an alternative to materialism in the transhuman perspective. The section further discusses, with responses from the *Botho* viewpoint, how transhumanism might bear on the immaterial and material aspects of the human being. The section “The Epistemological Aspect of Human Nature” section (7.3), explicates how knowledge is acquired and justified according to transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective. The section discusses how epistemology fits in transhuman perspective and implications of knowledge in a transhuman context with responses from the *Botho* perspective. Section 7.4 discusses “Human Nature according to Transhumanism and *Botho*” as well as outlines the kinds or degrees of enhancement that make one human, or non-human according to the *Botho* standpoint. It further discusses the necessary and sufficient conditions required for being a human as opposed to a non-human,

the immaterial and material aspects of human nature, how mind uploading would affect immaterial and material aspects, and the implication of cybernetic enhancement.

7.2 The Immaterial and Material Aspects of the Human Being

This section largely draws on the exposition of the immaterial and material aspects of being human from chapter 3, and applies them to biotechnological enhancements. It explains that according to standard interpretations of transhumanism, being human is constituted by the material body and material consciousness. It goes on to explain the transhuman materialistic account of the human being, as well as the immaterial and material aspects of *Botho*. Lastly, it discusses, with responses from the *Botho* perspective, how transhumanism might bear on the immaterial and material aspects of the human being. It contends that standard interpretations of transhumanism have some similarities with the *Botho* perspective in regard to the understanding of human nature.

Transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective concur that the material body is what partially constitutes being human, while what constitutes being a person for the *Botho* perspective is the immateriality and relationality, but for transhumanism it is consciousness, which transhumanism regards as material. The human being in the *Botho* perspective could remain human without consciousness, but s/he could become non-human without the material body. Similarly, the human being in the transhumanist perspective could remain human without consciousness, but could become a non-human without the body.

The immaterial and material aspects of *Botho* on one hand, and the body and consciousness components of transhumanism on the other, would interact with, and affect each other. In transhumanism, the body and consciousness affect each other because they are regarded as

material. There is no immaterial aspect to human nature, according to typical forms of transhumanism. As specified by the *Botho* standpoint, the immaterial aspect does not die along with bodily death, but in transhumanism, it is the consciousness that does not have to die along with bodily death.

What transhumanism regards as consciousness, and need not perish along with the body appears to be what *Botho* regards as the spirit, which need not perish with the body either. In discussing the impact of enhancement on the immaterial and material aspects, this thesis argues that moderate biotechnological enhancements need not substantially affect either of the aspects. It argues that already, biological cells, tissues and neurons “naturally” die and are replaced all the time until the death of the body. These processes of death and replacement are simultaneous, and any changes in the nature of the being, are so slow that they are generally unobservable until after many years. The natural changes in the material aspect, therefore, do not substantially affect either the material or immaterial aspects of the individual. Nonetheless, this thesis argues that radical enhancement may substantially affect the material and immaterial aspects, and could result in beings which, based on the *Botho* view, would not be human beings. This chapter only draws the metaphysical aspect of being human, which contrasts with the moral sense discussed above in chapter five.

7.2.1 A Transhuman Materialistic Account of Human Nature

This section explains that the transhumanist account of human nature is materialistic. It argues that, according to the standard interpretation of transhumanism, the material body constitutes being human while consciousness constitutes being a person.

Locke (1690:324) argues that:

For should the soul of a prince, carrying with it consciousness of the prince's past life, enter and inform the body of a cobbler, as soon as deserted by his own soul, everyone sees he will be the same person with the prince, accountable only for the prince's action: but who would say it is the same man? The body too goes to the making of the man, and would, I guess, to everyone determine the man in this case, wherein the soul, with all its princely thoughts about it, would not make another man: but he would be the same cobbler to everyone besides himself.

According to Locke if the cobbler's memories (consciousness) are transferred into the prince's body and the prince's memories are transferred to the cobbler's body, the one in the cobbler's body would think he is the prince and the one in the prince's body would think he is the cobbler. Locke doesn't use the term "human-being". I use the term "human being" to refer to what Locke calls a "man". According to Locke, what makes up a person is consciousness, but what makes up a man (human being) is a physical body. The prince's body is therefore the man (human being), while his consciousness is the person. The *Botho* perspective similarly says a human body is essential for something to be a human being, so I assume what Locke calls a "man" is a human being according to the *Botho* perspective. Locke's view suggests that some beings could intuitively be humans or manage to survive as human beings without having any psychological features, for example, human embryos, human foetuses, and aged adults in addition to psychologically and mentally crippled individuals, who are not self-aware. According to this perspective, the memory is irrelevant to our persistence as human beings. If I am to lapse into permanent mental incapacity, I would remain human for as long as my body lives, but, for Locke, the person would have perished.

Locke helps us understand “personhood” and being “human” according to transhumanism. His view is relevant to transhumanism because transhumanism’s emphasis on rationality and disembodied consciousness as the defining aspect of personhood. According to the standard transhumanist perspective, while on one hand consciousness has to be preserved, on the other hand the human body is physically limited; hence, there is need to either upgrade it or to completely discard it. According to transhumanism, human nature is not fixed. The material body needs alteration to raise its capabilities or appearances beyond normal human levels. For example, body alteration could be done, by replacing body parts with prosthetic body parts, altering skin colour through bleaching, beauty surgery, body building or cognitive enhancement.

Transhumanism also suggests the possibility of human consciousness existing without bodies, whereby the mind is downloaded into a new body, or allowed to remain in cyber reality. According to Bostrom (2003:5-6), the enhanced individual may not be human. He explains that enhanced individuals would not be limited by the frailties of human bodies; therefore, the human body could be discarded, while consciousness would be preserved. Thus, an individual would transform from being a human being to being a person that is no longer human. It would, therefore, depend on the degree of transformation to determine the humanity of an enhanced individual. If the body is preserved, the enhanced individual could remain a human being. However, if the whole body is discarded, the enhanced individual would not be human.

Transhumanism and Neutral Monism

Neutral monism holds that ultimate reality is all of one kind (Abdul 2019). Neutral monism is an alternative to the materialism/idealism/dualism disagreements in relation to both big

history and transhumanism (Abdul 2019:56). The goal of neutral monism is to “close the apparent chasm between mental and physical entities by exhibiting both as consisting of groups of the more basic neutral entities” (Abdul 2019: 56). Materialism is challenged by the view of the self as patterns of information which come across as more consistent with transhumanist goals (Abdul 2019:735). According to transhumanism, personhood is mere information patterns within the substrate of brain. This information that makes a person includes memories, hopes, dreams and countless mental events. Abdul observes that information ontology is firmly located as a neutral monistic entity, and hence the computationalist view proposed by transhumanism entails rejection of the strictly materialist conception of the nature of human persons (Abdul 2019:733). During mind uploading the information is transferred into another substrate. If the entire information-bearing pattern is reproduced, then the consciousness and personhood represented by that information-bearing pattern would be replicated in a new substrate. The person thus replicated would potentially be immortal as the substrate. Abdul further observes that mind uploading through computational-informational ontology is possible through incorporation of the neutral monism of information within their methodological and metaphysical frameworks.

I do not think computationalists must reject materialism as Ojochogwu Abdul suggests. Materialists do not share a uniform view about the nature of psychological properties. Some materialists accept the reality of consciousness. Modified forms of materialistic theory of mind and body have been developed. For instance epiphenomenalism is the view that thoughts, feelings etc are not merely physical states in brains but they are adjudged to be a by product of the sequence of physical occurrences, something like the smoke given off by fire (Popkin and Stroll 1993:129). Thus, human beings have a material brain which operates to produce consciousness. Uploading consciousness into a machine is technologically feasible if

mental aspects and consciousness are physical processes of the brain and perhaps merely if they are correlated with them. If consciousness could survive death just like the immaterial aspect in the *Botho* perspective, then persons could be reincarnated with the same consciousness in different bodies.

7.2.2 Implications of Enhancements for the Material/Immaterial Aspects of the Human Being

This section discusses some forms of enhancements, and indicates from the *Botho* standpoint their implications to the immaterial and material aspects. It explains from the *Botho* perspective that moderate biotechnological enhancements may bring changes to the material and immaterial aspects of the human being, but they need not substantially affect these aspects. This is because both the material body and the mind are not fixed; the human body changes through time and the human mind is improved by means of information technology. Similarly, the immaterial aspect is affected by the changes to the material body, and it also affects the material body. For instance, a blow on the head may cause an individual to lose consciousness; spiritual experiences may affect bodily processes, ultimately causing diseases. Some diseases of the brain may affect not only the mental life, but the spiritual life as well. It is explained that there is interaction between the material and immaterial aspects, as long as an individual is alive. However, interaction between these aspects stops at death. It also spells out some form of enhancements that may radically affect the immaterial and material aspects, like, uploading the human mind into an info sphere or getting rid of the entire human body.

Transhumanism usually includes a materialist account of human nature, which means that transhumanists generally discuss changes to the material aspect but not to the immaterial aspects. In contrast, the *Botho* view holds that the human being is both material and

immaterial and that both aspects would interact with and affect each other in the context of enhancements. That means that changes to the material aspect sometimes affect the immaterial aspect. If the body survives, it is inseparable from the immaterial aspect. However, when the body dies, the immaterial aspect would separate from the body, and the individual would not continue to exist as a human being, unless the immaterial is transferred to another homo sapient. Thus, a dead corpse does not affect anything as such. Drawing from the *Botho* perspective, this section discusses how enhancements to the material aspect might affect both the immaterial and material aspects.

First genetic enhancement is discussed. Genetic enhancement would allow material to be added, removed, or altered to grant the human being superior human traits and behaviour such as the potential to live longer. If the human body lives, changes to the material aspect need not affect the immaterial aspect. According to Buchanan (2009), human nature contains bad, as well as good genes. Buchanan claims that eliminating some of the bad genes would not alter human nature in any significant sense. He maintains that the gene pool is always changing no matter what people do. According to Buchanan, the “natural” process by which evolution operates alters the gene pool, and the natural selection favours those who happen to have genes that confer immunity to the diseases (*ibid.*). Bostrom (2005a) similarly argues that the human being, in his or her present form, is but, a transitory entity within an on-going evolutionary change, a process which is by no means complete. Gene enhancement alters the material aspect of the human being, but altering the material aspect as such is not an issue because this aspect is already constantly changing. I presume effects will be mutual, if the material aspect is affected by changes but not substantially affected. Similarly, the immaterial aspect would be affected by the material change, but it would not be substantially affected. Individuals with new genes or desirable genes would still be humans.

The human being is “substantially affected” by a transhuman act when the essence of being human is tampered with such that a being is no longer human. The clearest time a transhuman act is tagged “substantially affected” is when there is the absence of a living body, for example through death. If the material aspect is substantially affected, resulting in the body perishing, there would be separation between these two aspects. The immaterial would not be affected because it would no longer be limited by perceptible conditions. However, it would no longer exist as a human being, but could exist as a person.

Transhumanism advocates for technological transformation in the form of bodily improvements and artificial bodies. All these bodily transformations would not substantially affect either the material or immaterial aspects. Ray Kurzweil (2003) is of the view that human biological systems should be replaced by mechanical systems. Prosthetics would replace most components of the skeletal system and other body parts. A prosthesis is an artificial body part, or an artificial feature or piece of material applied to a human’s body. Neurons would also be replaced by circuitry and neuroprosthetic devices. Kurzweil further states that it would be possible to upgrade the digestive system by delivering nutrients through nanobots. Nanobots could also be used to enable the body to eliminate food eaten for pure pleasure and to allow such food to be digested in a way that it would no longer be absorbed by the body. This kind of enhancement would enhance physical appearance; an individual would not gain weight because his or her body would not absorb unnecessary fats. Red blood cells could be replaced with artificial respirocytes so that an enhanced individual would be able to run for a long time without the need to breath. Other possible replacements would be the platelets, white blood cells, heart and most of the vital body organs. The replacement of the vital organs could overcome the aging process. In all these replacements

or changes in the material aspect, the immaterial aspect is affected but not substantially affected by the changes. If an individual dies, the body would also die but the immaterial aspect would survive. There would no longer be an interaction between these aspects. The surviving immaterial aspect would not be a human being, unless it is transferred to another homo sapient.

Other enhancements that may bring changes to the physical body without necessarily altering the immaterial aspects are, pharmacological agents meant to increase physical capabilities, such as to run faster for longer or to develop muscle mass at greatly increased rates. To achieve this, the pharmacological agents may need to simultaneously alter the brain and body's states, mood, forms and functions. There is also cosmetic surgery, which is used to enhance physical and facial appearances such as breast enlargement and facial contouring. People can also transform their bodies through tattooing, body building, piercing, dieting, and changing their skin colour by tanning or bleaching. Genetic enhancement, pharmacology, cosmetic surgery and nanotechnologies would not substantially affect being human as understood by *Botho* because they do not involve getting rid of the entire human body, but they involve replacing and improving the body parts. Getting rid of the entire human body would lead to the death of the body. According to the *Botho* perspective, the self would continue to live but it would no longer be human. As long as the material body survives, the immaterial and material aspects would remain in connection, and they will affect each other.

While improvement of the human body does not affect human nature, uploading of the mind may affect it. For example, radical forms of enhancement may substantially affect the material and immaterial aspects of the human being. Such forms of enhancement include disembodiment and replacement of the entire human body with a virtual body, nano-body, or

cyborg body. For example, Kurzweil (2005:138) envisions a scenario where it would be possible to scan and upload the human brain into a human-like structure. The human-like structure would have human feelings and would be immensely intelligent. While the “body” structure could die, the mind would continue to live on the Web in the posthuman future.

Replacing the entire body, or discarding the entire body, would lead to the death of the initial body. When the initial body dies, the immaterial aspect would separate from it. There would be no more interaction between the immaterial aspect and the body. The immaterial aspect would not survive as a human being without a body, but it could survive as a person.

However, one of the possibilities is that the immaterial aspect could inhabit a new human body. If it inhabits a new body, it will remain a human being. However, not all bodies are sufficient to remain human. For example, a silicon body, or a computer/machine with a bundle of information would not qualify as a human being as determined by the *Botho* viewpoint. This is because a computer would not count as the sort of body essential to humanity.

Most of the enhancements are meant to alter the material aspect. However, like it has already been mentioned, in accord to the *Botho* perspective, there is a causal relationship between the material and immaterial aspect, such that enhancements to the material aspect might also affect the immaterial aspects. Moderate enhancement to the material aspect may affect both the material and immaterial aspects, not substantially. As aforementioned, the effects are mutual. If the material aspect is not substantially affected, plausibly the immaterial aspect would not be substantially affected. In the case of death, where the immaterial is substantially affected, the immaterial would no longer be affected by material changes because it would have separated from the material aspect. However, radical enhancement to

the material aspect may substantially affect the material aspect. In this case, there would be no affection between the two aspects because the body would die and separate from the immaterial aspect. The next section discusses the *Botho* approach to epistemology and the role of epistemology in the conceptualisation of enhancements. Based on the *Botho* perspective, knowledge is another ontological aspect of human nature.

7.3 The Epistemological Aspect of Human Nature

This section largely draws on the exposition of African epistemology, particularly the *Botho* perspective and Western epistemology from chapter 4, and applies them to biotechnological enhancements. Recall how knowledge is acquired and justified according to Western epistemology which is applicable to transhumanism and African epistemology, particularly the *Botho* perspective. This section shows that transhumanism considers knowledge to be science-based; the only legitimate claims about the nature of human knowledge are those that can be confirmed by the methods of the natural sciences. It also shows that transhumanism limits knowledge of reality to two main sources, viz., rationalism and empiricism, which are different ways of understanding scientific knowledge. Recall that from chapter 4 that the *Botho* perspective tends to consider knowledge to be holistic in nature. For example, according to the *Botho* perspective, the human being has a rational capacity which is relative to experience, but also, knowledge capability is mystical. Mystical knowledge lies beyond the sciences; it is not based on either rational or scientific judgement. The section provides examples of enhancements, which may limit knowledge capability and of those which may increase it.

This section introduces transhumanism in the context of African epistemology. Most African scholars who discuss transhumanism in an African context focus only on the metaphysical

and normative aspects of personhood. This study differs with those because it addresses human knowledge as one of the aspects of human nature in the *Botho* perspective and how transhumanism might bear on knowledge acquisition.

7.3.1 How Epistemology Fits in the Transhumanist Perspective

Recall from chapter 4 that epistemology concerns itself with ways of knowing, and how we know what we know. As it has already been said, the standard interpretation of transhumanism rejects the idea that the spirit exists, or that the human being is simultaneously an immaterial thing, espousing instead a materialistic explanation for all states of body and consciousness. Proponents of transhumanism believe in the potential of science to improve human lives. This is aligned with Western epistemologies that consider knowledge as scientifically based. However, disembodied consciousness, which is proposed by transhumanism, suggests the possibility of acquiring mystical knowledge. In the absence of bodily organs it is impossible to acquire knowledge through sense experience. Therefore, knowledge acquired by disembodied consciousness is internal (reason and mysticism). Since consciousness can be improved, posthumans can acquire more knowledge based on their consciousness and reasoning abilities. Disembodied consciousness could also acquire mystical knowledge of revealed truth without empirical evidence or facts. Further, through minduploading, knowledge which is lost upon the death of the body could be preserved and developed to make more knowledge. Ultimately knowledge would continue to evolve. Moreover, disembodied consciousness could merge with other uploaded individuals, forming a community of meta-beings. This community would share knowledge among themselves.

7.3.2 Implications of Knowledge in a Transhuman Context with Responses from the *Botho* Perspective

This section discusses how knowledge justification in Western epistemology influences knowledge acquisition in a transhumanist context, and it responds from the *Botho* perspective. It is of the view that some forms of transhumanism could improve human knowledge. It also argues that disembodied consciousness need not limit human knowledge. It shows that metaphysical intuition in transhumanism, applies to *Botho* in the case of the living dead and that lacking bodies and senses does not have to limit knowledge.

According to the *Botho* perspective, knowledge can be acquired mainly through the five senses, mysticism, reason, and testimony. Mystical knowledge and knowledge acquired from the senses are two aspects of one and the same reality, and either one or the other could be used for epistemic justification. Western perceptions of knowledge partly constitute epistemology in the *Botho* standpoint. For example, David Hume and John Locke claim that knowledge is based on empirical consciousness. Rene Descartes holds that what can be known, involves the use of reason. These philosophers acknowledge reasoning and sense experience just like in the *Botho* perspective. For instance, after Descartes doubted many things in search for indubitable truth, he acknowledged that the self and things exist. Descartes could not doubt what he did not know, he indirectly appealed to the senses. Similarly, Hume accepts mathematics. Thus, whereas rationalism always finds a way to accommodate the input of experience, empiricism usually admits introspection as a source of knowledge. Most Western epistemologists, however, omit mystical knowledge, which partially constitutes epistemology in the *Botho* perspective.

This study is of the view that mind uploads in transhumanism share similar attributes with the living dead in the *Botho* perspective. For instance, mind uploads could be rational with self-consciousness and self-reflection. Mind uploads and the living dead do not have bodies and senses, their knowledge would come from metaphysical intuition, reasoning, and testimony. Similarly, traditional doctors and diviners are believed to know about ancestors without using senses. The mentioned beings take the metaphysical route in justifying their knowledge claims, and in that process base their justification on the internal, without giving much recognition or acknowledgment of the external aspects. According to this view, sense experience is not the sole source of our knowledge of the phenomena of the world. Thus, epistemic justification can be derived from either external or internal sources.

This study argues that some enhancements could improve knowledge acquisition. For example, cybernetic enhancement to create immortality of the mind would be preserved for future use and could be developed or enhanced to produce more knowledge. The information could be uploaded onto a web site and would be accessed by people throughout the world. Moreover, uploaded individuals could merge with other uploads in cyber reality and share knowledge.

As already mentioned, the *Botho* perspective ascribes knowledge to both the community and the individual. Through interaction, enhanced humans would share ideas with un-enhanced human beings who would gain knowledge. Moreover, intelligent people would interact with other intelligent people and they would boost each other's knowledge. Cybernetic enhancement towards super intelligence, through genetic enhancement, whereby embryos are selected for intelligence and other traits, could add knowledge to the community at large. Enhanced human beings could help others solve problems; and those who have challenges

could ask questions, which would ultimately add to their acquisition of knowledge. The Setswana proverb *e anywang e leletse e ruta e e mo maleng* (Literally, the one that suckles looking up teaches the one that is in the stomach. This means the ways of the elders are copied by the young (this is especially so with bad habits). Therefore, intelligent people could pass knowledge to others, who would in turn broadcast the knowledge they have acquired.

Cybernetic enhancement to increase longevity would benefit the society because enhancing longevity means there would be many elderly people who are better custodians of knowledge. If human beings lived long, they would acquire a greater amount of knowledge during their existence.

Pharmaceutical enhancement is another example which can improve mental processes involved in gaining knowledge and comprehension. They can also improve cognitive functions like boosting alertness, memory retrieval and concentration. Human nature is not fixed, but changes through an individual's entire life. The human brain grows new cells, makes new connections, and even increases in size. These changes improve cognitive function. Enhanced humans would have their options, and capacities expanded, so they would be able to make better decisions, and solve cognitive problems faster and more successfully. Enhancement of the human body or body transformation may lead to improved experiences and new knowledge.

Some forms of enhancement may affect an individual's ability to acquire mystical knowledge. Through cybernetic enhancement, human consciousness may be duplicated in machines and be vastly improved. Andersen et. al. (2014:223) concur with the *Botho* perspective and transhumanism that knowledge is not just based on sensory input. They hold

that the human brain uses internal models to predict what would happen in the world. They explain that in normal circumstances, the brain compares its prediction with external input from sensory apparatus. If there is a mismatch, it elicits a prediction error signal, which normally causes the brain to correct and update its prediction. They further argue that depriving individuals' sensory information obstructs the brain from monitoring the situation for potential errors. Therefore, sensory deprivation could elicit mystical knowledge. In the case of mind uploads and the living dead, the lack of bodies and senses could similarly be a form of sensory deprivation. The lack of bodies and senses suggests that disembodied consciousness is cut from external reality hence, becomes dependent on internal models. Disembodied consciousness could therefore foster mystical knowledge on mind uploads.

Other enhancements that may foster mystical knowledge are gene enhancement and pharmacological enhancement for cognitive or mental abilities. These enhancements may raise conscious level. According to the *Botho* perspective, the immaterial aspect houses consciousness. Andersen et. al. similarly hold that mystical experiences are in fact the same experiences of "pure consciousness" (2014:219). Spirituality or acquisition of mystical knowledge requires consciousness. An individual needs to be aware, and to be self-aware, in order to apprehend spirituality or mystical knowledge. The more an individual is conscious, the more s/he feels connected to spiritual reality.

Peek (1991:195-196) explains that in Africa, diviners are either chosen by the ancestors or volunteer themselves. Whereas those who are chosen could inherit the skills, those who volunteer themselves during their adulthood could be trained. Gene enhancement or modifying the human genome would produce children who are highly conscious. This enhancement is analogous to diviners whose skills are determined at birth by ancestors.

Similarly, pharmacological enhancement could raise consciousness or self-awareness in adults, ultimately fostering their mystical knowledge.

This study acknowledges that some enhancements could limit knowledge acquisition. A good example would be enhancing an individual to a point where s/he becomes an automaton or robot. As aforementioned, an automaton is an unconscious determined machine which cannot reason or have any experience. It would not be able “to see” for itself or to experience in a direct, firsthand manner. Further it would not be able to be told about or informed of anything (testimony from others). Furthermore, an automaton would lack the capacity to acquire mystical knowledge because it would be incapable of self-consciousness and self-reflection.

7.4 Human Nature According to Transhumanism and *Botho*

In the previous chapter and previous sections of this chapter, aspects of human nature according to the *Botho* perspective, freewill, immaterial and material parts of human beings and the epistemological aspect were discussed. In the preceding chapter and sections, these aspects of human nature were singled out. However, they are once more discussed in this section in consolidation with the other aspects that are currently being explained because being human does not depend on one aspect. The purpose is to find out when a transhuman is a human or non-human as determined by the *Botho* view. This section discusses merely the metaphysical aspect of being human, setting aside moral considerations of humanness.

This section discusses the nature of the human being according to transhumanism and the *Botho* viewpoint. It contends that a modest, restrained or bridled form of transhumanism, retains human nature as opposed to a radical advancement. If the changes were moderate, they would not alter the nature of the human being, and his or her capabilities such as,

rationality, knowledge and freewill. However, if they were radical, they may undermine the human status or reduce it to that of a mere object. It discusses the kinds or degrees of enhancements that would make an individual human or non-human according to the *Botho* perspective. There is a more specific meaning that the Setswana worldview brings to the understanding of human nature. Therefore, this study contributes towards familiarising the African socio-cultural context with the debate on transhumanism.

7.4.1 Human Versus Non-Human

This section discusses the essence of being human, as distinct from animals and distinguishes the aspect of being a human being from that of being a person. It argues that it is consistent with *Botho* to hold that an individual can be a human being and still not be a person, or can be a person and still not be a human being.

Recall that from chapter 3 that human nature consists of what it is to be a human being, or the necessary and sufficient conditions for being a human as opposed to a non-human. These terms were explicitly distinguished in chapter 3. As it is illustrated in this study, a “human being” may or may not be a “person” and a “person” may or may not be a “human being”. According to the African tradition, human nature is understood to include the material body, and therefore beings that lack the material body like ancestors are probably best understood as persons and not human beings.

This section discusses all the necessary and sufficient conditions of being human in the *Botho* standpoint. As reported by the *Botho* perspective, a human being is more than just a person and it includes a body (Gaie 2007). The *Botho* perspective would regard an individual who is unconscious, a human being because being human according to this perspective is not

exclusively conscious or rational. As long as an individual has the physical body and the immaterial aspect, s/he is considered a human being according to the *Botho* perspective. Similarly, rationality, will or memory do not exclusively make one human. A human can lose some of his or her characteristic features and retain her humanity, for example, an Alzheimer's patient remains human. Further, every individual's way of reasoning differs from others. An imbecile is a human just like the genius. Similarly, a murderer, saint and clown are all humans. Moreover, disability does not suggest that an individual is non-human. In Setswana, a sick person who cannot do anything for him/herself or an elderly person who is very weak and/or sick can be described as *ga go na motho mo go ene* (there is no person in him/her), this phrase implies ability, and not what identifies a human being.

In relation to the concept of human versus person, one observes that individuals like God and ancestors are not humans but are still persons. What makes God and ancestors “non-humans”, although they are rightly described as “persons”, is in the first instance that they lack material bodies. Similarly, human minds uploaded into computers are not humans but are still persons. What makes intelligent Martians and human minds uploaded into computers aptly characterised as “persons” is the fact that, even though they are not human, they may have an immaterial aspect, which houses self-awareness and rationality and be relational. Being a “person” as something distinct from being a human is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

7.4.2 Freewill, Materialism, Reason and Human Nature

Chapter 6 exclusively discussed freewill as an aspect of human nature. However, this section discusses freewill in consolidation with the other aspects that are currently being explained. It explicates that; transhumanism need not alter human nature. It further elaborates on how

transhumanism acknowledges that human beings have the material body and that they are free, rational beings. As seen in the previous chapter, in transhumanism and the *Botho* worldview, it is recognised that the realities of determinism and freedom occur mutually for the individual. Determinism does not necessarily imply lack of freewill, although it may imply relative freedom. Transhumanism is materialistic in its description of human nature. However, materialism does not necessarily limit human freewill. Human beings are free by virtue of being rational. Enhanced human beings will be free if they can reason. As for rationality, transhumanism acknowledges the nature of the human being by insisting that s/he is a rational being.

7.4.3 Material, Immaterial Aspects and Human Nature

The aspects of being human under discussion in this section are the material and immaterial aspects. This section explains that changes in the material body need not make an individual non-human. It explains that, as long as an individual does not lose his or her body, s/he remains human. Thus, if the material body and immaterial aspect interact, the human being persists. It argues that biotechnological enhancement need not substantially affect either the material or the immaterial aspect. It further maintains that an individual who loses his or her memory, and has half of his or her body replaced is still a human being. Supposing that half of the body was to be replaced with artificial material, the *Botho* perspective would regard that individual a human being.

According to the *Botho* perspective, the human body is essential for human nature. This body does not physically remain the same throughout the process of becoming. S/he changes over time as his or her atoms and molecules are replaced and as s/he grows. People like amputees and those with artificial additions like implants, artificial limbs and artificial organs consider

such additions essential parts of themselves, and the people are considered human beings. The notion that the human body is a fleshly machine could be true. The human body works as a machine where most body parts are replaceable. It is therefore possible, according to the *Botho* view, to be a human being with some of the body parts replaced. Like already mentioned, the cells of a body change over time, what makes it the same body is the immaterial aspect which continues to interact with it. Suppose the brain and all limbs are replaced, an individual would remain human because his or her body continues to interact with his or her immaterial aspect. What enables individuals with prosthesis, or whose physical bodies are partly mechanised to remain humans is the continuity of the material and immaterial aspect. Once these two aspects separate in the case of death, the individual would no longer be human.

7.4.4 Body and Mind in the Mind Upload Kind of Enhancement

This section, argues that human nature requires a human body, and therefore an individual whose mental contents have been transferred to a computer, and then downloaded into a robot is no longer a human being. However, if the enhanced individual is essentially immaterial and relational, it could be a person.

An example of an enhancement that would make an individual a non-human is where the contents of a human brain are uploaded into a computer. The person would arguably continue to exist, but not as a human being. Kurzweil (2005) speculates that the fusion of humans and machines will usher in a new phase in the evolution of the human species in which intelligent machines will augment human physical and mental capacity then supersede the humans who have designed them. Julian Savulescu (2009:214) explains that to achieve immortality and

super-intelligence, the human mind would be uploaded or transferred into a new cloned human body and brain, or into a computer.

The argument from the *Botho* perspective is that uploading the human mind into machines is incorrectly assumed to imply that the human body is not essential for a thing to be human. According to Kurzweil (2005:388), “it is the persistence and power of patterns that support life and intelligence [that] is far more important than the material stuff that constitutes it”. Thus, consciousness is more important than the physical body. As determined by the *Botho* standpoint, the body is a distinct human feature, even if the “upload” may have rationality, rationality alone is not the human being. It would be difficult to understand how the human being is distinct from an animal because there must be an essential reference to his or her body. The human is nonetheless, not an animal because characteristically s/he is rational, has a self, and has a different sort of body.

In discussing the possibilities regarding uploading, Bostrom (2003) contends that in one of those possibilities, the original brain or biological entity would be preserved. He claims that through virtual reality, an uploaded individual could partake in all the sensory experiences available to biological human beings and would “interact with people on the outside and even rent robot bodies in order to work in, or explore physical reality” (Bostrom 2003:18). This means that an uploaded individual continues to engage. The *Botho* perspective would fail to recognise an uploaded individual as human, regardless of his or her ability to relate because a mere relationship without the human body does not make an individual human.

According to Kurzweil (2005), the human beings can survive while leaving behind his or her current body, but not unless s/he has physical embodiment. Kurzweil believes that actual physical embodiment can be very different from the current physical embodiment. The

Botho perspective would not agree that a human being could become “embodied” in a computer or a robot because human beings do not inhabit objects, but inhabit the bodies of human beings. If the body is observably different from that of a human being, it would be non-human according to *Botho*. Further, if the enhanced human is mere matter without the immaterial aspect, it would not be human based on the *Botho* outlook.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined the immaterial, material and epistemological aspects of human beings. From the discussions, it has been shown that moderate biotechnological enhancement would not affect either the material or immaterial aspects of a human being. However, radical enhancement could substantially affect both the material and immaterial. The material and immaterial interact and affect each other. If the material body dies, the immaterial aspect would separate from it, and there would no longer be interaction. The material body is an aspect without which a being would not be human. In accordance with the framework of the study, the examination reveals that, while *Botho* is inimical to certain artificial changes or degrees of change to what is currently perceived as human, there is a misconception that *Botho* is automatically opposed to every type and degree of transhumanism. This is exemplified by Francis Fukuyama’s argument against transhumanism on the grounds that it will alter human nature. Such a misconception is based on a lack of detailed research on the topic, or at least the *Botho* perspective offers a different understanding. Generally, proponents of the *Botho* perspective are unlikely to grant humanity to an individual whose human nature they deem to have been tampered with, or whom they deem to have transitioned into a posthuman like mind uploads. However, this study has demonstrated that the *Botho* perspective would grant humanity to individuals that retain elements like, a human body. The

next chapter discusses the impact of biotechnological enhancement to being a person and personal identity.

Chapter 8: The Impact of Enhancements on Personhood and Personal Identity

8.1 Introduction

Chapters 6 and 7 examined the impact of biotechnological enhancements on major ontological aspects of humans, namely, freewill, material/immaterial features, knowledge, and human nature. This chapter (chapter 8) continues the analysis of “persons” and “personal identity”. It explores what makes an individual a person, which would be different from being a human being, and what constitutes a person’s identity as distinct from that of other persons. The chapter distinguishes different contexts or meanings of personhood, namely, the metaphysical, moral and physical/material.

It expounds that immateriality and relationality are sufficient for an individual to be a person in the *Botho* viewpoint. For instance, in the previous chapter it was explained that an Alzheimer patient, or an unconscious person would still be a person according to *Botho*. This is because personhood in the *Botho* view is not merely consciousness, but it is constituted by the immaterial aspect, which houses consciousness. It further explains that mind-uploads with consciousness could be persons because the presence of mental abilities suggests the presence of immaterial elements, and relationality, which constitute personhood for *Botho*. It further demonstrates that a person could exist without a body in both the transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective.

Regarding personal identity in the *Botho* perspective, it shows that immateriality and relationality are necessary, and sufficient for a person’s continued existence. Immateriality in this broader context refers not only to consciousness from the perspective of transhumanism, but also to the notions of life force and spirituality. These, according to the *Botho* perspective, are thought to house consciousness. In contrast to transhumanism, the *Botho* perspective

argues that what is essential to being a person in the metaphysical sense is the housing of consciousness, not consciousness itself. It discusses personal identity in the context of the afterlife and contends that, while the material aspect is essential for human nature, the immaterial aspect plus continuity of relationships ensure personal identity over time.

Whereas the *Botho* standpoint elevates spirituality over materiality, transhumanism elevates consciousness over embodiment. Thus, both the *Botho* perspective and transhumanism dispute material and bodily continuity as a requirement for personal identity, and broadly speaking uphold mental or spiritual continuity. For both the *Botho* and transhumanist perspectives, personal identity is separable from the body; it is in consciousness for transhumanism, and in the immaterial spirit plus relationality for *Botho*. The transhuman's "disembodied consciousness" could therefore be likened to "the living dead" (disembodied spirits) in the *Botho* perspective.

Moreover, it asserts that identity, as specified by *Botho* viewpoint, does not stop at spirituality or materiality; it covers relationality so that the community and family play a role in relating with an individual as the same person. It argues that, even if an enhanced individual may not remember that s/he is the same person, s/he would be the same person, as long as other human persons like his family and friends relate with him/her as the same person, and as long as s/he retains the same immaterial nature. Therefore, loss of consciousness would not necessarily cause loss of personal identity.

One argument that lends novelty to this study is that a biotechnologically enhanced individual can remain a person and one with a particular identity under the *Botho* perspective. Scholars in African philosophy have largely ignored the debate about personal identity in the context of transhumanism. Instead, some have overruled the possibility of an enhanced being

continuing to be a person in the moral, as opposed to the metaphysical sense. On one hand, Chimakonam (2021) appeals to Ifeanyi Menkiti's Afro-communitarian account of personhood to maintain that the kind of personhood we can attain through enhancement is a merely technologised personhood, and not Afro-communitarian personhood. Nonetheless, my observation is that Menkiti holds that a virtuous person is someone who has become a complete person, or who has fulfilled his or her duties. This account of personhood is strictly moral. Therefore, Chimakonam (2021) addresses only normative personhood, which focuses on what an individual does to become a real person, roughly to exhibit virtue. In contrast, this chapter covers the metaphysical distinction as one of the fundamental components of personhood. It attests that, for *Botho*, even a radically "enhanced" individual is often, still a person instead of some other kind of being (even if not a complete or good person).

On the other hand, Fayemi (2018) gives us the first favourable opinion of transhumanism by an African philosopher. Fayemi states that some transhumanist elements are embedded in African ontological conceptions of personhood since both believe that human nature is a work in progress, and is alterable depending on moral choices. However, his focus differs from that of this thesis where he does not explain how enhancement may affect the metaphysical aspects of personhood. Fayemi largely discusses transhumanist elements embedded in the normative aspect of African personhood, whereas this study does not deal with the normative, but focuses on the metaphysical.

Furthermore, this chapter covers personal identity in the context of enhanced persons, viz., whether enhancement has any impact on the identity of a person as distinct from that of other persons. Such an enquiry has not been undertaken before by those working in the African philosophical tradition. In respect to *Botho*'s approach to personal identity, this study is of the

view that immateriality and relationality are necessary and sufficient for a person's continued existence. The study explores the impact of biotechnological enhancement on the metaphysical aspect of not just personhood, but also personal identity, as far as the concept of *Botho* is concerned.

The first section (Section 8.2) discusses personhood according to the *Botho* and transhumanist standpoints. It contrasts the two uses of the concept "person" in the *Botho* perspective, viz., the metaphysical and the normative. The section also discusses the physical and material perception of personhood according to the standard interpretation of transhumanism. Section 8.3, examines responses from the *Botho* perspective, what it means and implies to define personhood as strictly material. The final section (8.4) deals with Personal Identity. It investigates what it means for a person to persist from one time to another or to be the same person at different times according to transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective. The discussion includes implications of biotechnological enhancement on personal identity with responses from the perspective of *Botho*.

8.2 Personhood According to the *Botho* Perspective and Transhuman Perspective

This section demonstrates that, according to the *Botho* perspective, the metaphysical aspect of personhood consists of life force, and spirituality that are thought to house consciousness in a relational manner. It explicates both the metaphysical and normative aspects of personhood in the *Botho* perspective and lastly, the material personhood in transhumanism. After addressing different aspects of personhood, it focuses on the *Botho* metaphysical aspect of personhood, which is relevant to trans/posthumanism. Regarding transhumanism, it argues that consciousness defines personhood. The metaphysical aspect of personhood strongly suggests that there can exist persons who are non-human. For instance, people whose minds have been

downloaded into computers could qualify as persons on the basis that they have mental abilities. As mentioned earlier, mental abilities could point to the presence of a person in the *Botho* perspective in the sense that they suggest the presence of immaterial elements and relationality, which constitute personhood for *Botho*.

8.2.1 Metaphysical Aspect of Personhood: Immateriality

Recall that from chapter 3 that metaphysical personhood normally includes material and immaterial aspects. Immateriality in this broader context refers not only to consciousness, as transhumanism does – immateriality also includes the concepts of life force and spirituality, which, from the perspective of *Botho*, are what contain consciousness. While Western philosophers such as Locke (1690:318) suggest that embryos, foetuses and some adults who have entered a permanent vegetative state may not qualify for personhood because they are not conscious, the *Botho* perspective regards them as persons. What makes them persons is life force and relationality.

As already mentioned in chapter 3 it is common to see the material aspect included as an aspect of human personhood. However, it seems that African scholars emphasise the immaterial aspect over the material, which suggests that it is possible to be a person without being a human. Placid Tempels (1959:50) similarly states that human persons are nothing more than essential energies or vital forces. According to this view, reality and persons imply force. Tempels explains that the universe is controlled by God who possesses force and gives it to everything he created. Tempels further explains that “... created beings preserve a bond, and intimate ontological relationship comparable with a causal relationship which binds creatures and creator” (1959:58).

Another example would be the African belief in the concept of life after death, or the possibility of surviving the death of the body, which suggests that the immaterial aspect is more emphasised. If an individual can survive the death of his or her body, a living body could not be a necessary condition for being a person. The living dead, despite their lack of bodies and hence, not being human beings anymore, persist as persons. The immaterial aspect is essential for the metaphysical personhood in the *Botho* perspective, whose conceptual equivalent in transhumanism is consciousness. An example is an individual whose mental contents have been transferred to a computer, or downloaded into a robot. According to the *Botho* theoretical framework of this study, such an individual is no longer a human but could be a person.

8.2.2 African Relational Metaphysics

In chapter 3, Tempels (1959) explains the African thought by means of the ideas of “vital force”, and of “relationality”. Tempels’ argument of relational metaphysics is further developed by Mbiti (1969), Menkiti (1984) and Metz (2018) who claim that the self cannot exist, unless as a part of a larger whole. It is also elucidated in the previous chapters that immateriality in relation is a key to personhood according to the *Botho* perspective. Whereas the immaterial aspect survives bodily death, persons are fundamentally relational, therefore a being cannot exist except in community with others. While the framework of this study recognises relationality as fundamental to personhood, it does not perceive the individual person only from a relational perspective, for it also has an immaterial aspect.

Recall that from the previous chapter (chapter 3) that the main difference between persons and animals is that persons are rational and relational or at least these mental abilities suggest the presence of immateriality and relationality, which ultimately constitute personhood for

Botho. For instance, a pride of lions or a troop of baboons is relational in a way, but not like persons; they lack a self that can persist without a body.

Tempels view of being in vital force suggests that all beings are related in some way. Mbiti (1969) introduces the concepts of kinship, tribe, clan and family in his communitarian thesis, which converges with the *Botho* perspective. He explains that the “kinship system also extends vertically to include the departed and those yet to be born” (1969:105). The *Botho* viewpoint similarly accepts the kinship relation as essential or central. The human person, according to the *Botho* perspective, essentially relates with his or her surrounding, his or her family, tribe, descendants, and God (Dube et. al. 2016). People are related either by blood or by marriage; hence my family would include not only my nuclear family but the extended one as well. The departed relatives also belong to the family.

In the Setswana worldview, death is conquered by the relational aspect of the human person. Communal relationships between the living and the ancestors connote the continuation of life beyond the grave. Chapter 3 expounded the concept of the living dead. Recall that Menkiti’s account differs with the Setswana view of the living dead. Whereas memory is a key sustaining relation in Menkiti’s context in Setswana context disembodied existence does not depend on the memory of other people. What exists in the mind, memory and thoughts of people is not a person, but the idea of a person. As reported in chapter 3, the immaterial aspect doesn’t die and the living need not to remember the living-dead for them to survive. Batswana for example used to bury their dead with things to use in the next life. This was not conditional. All needed to use their current implements in the next life whether or not they would be remembered, whether or not they might become ancestors (Amanze 2002: 200-212).

According to the standard interpretation of transhumanism a person is essentially the contents of his or her mind, the *Botho* perspective on the contrary contends that the metaphysical aspect of personhood is the immaterial aspect (which houses consciousness) plus the continuity of relationships. The living dead are, therefore, persons not only because they are immaterial but also because they relate with the living.

As already explicated in chapter 5, normative personhood depends on what an individual does. A virtuous or good person is one who successfully carries out moral duties. It is very important to draw a line between ontological or metaphysical personhood, and normative or moral personhood because some scholars conflate the two uses of personhood. For instance, the claim that an individual is not a person because s/he exhibited bad character is not to be taken literally to mean that they are not essentially persons. Rather, the claim is used metaphorically to mean that an individual has failed to exhibit “humanness” or what is valuable or virtuous to persons (Gaie 2007:33). This chapter sets aside normative personhood in order to focus on metaphysical personhood. It holds that enhanced individuals are metaphysically persons, even if they may not be human beings or exhibit humanness (virtue).

8.2.3 Physical/Material Aspect of Personhood in Transhumanism

According to the standard interpretation of transhumanism, persons are essentially material with no immaterial elements. The standard interpretation of transhumanism identifies mental states with the material aspect, or something that must be embodied (even if not in a particular human body). According to Kurzweil, a person is “a pattern of matter and energy that persists over time” (2005:383). He says that this information is lost when a person dies. He argues that:

I am principally a pattern that persists in time. I am an evolving pattern, and I can influence the evolution of my pattern. Knowledge is a pattern, as distinguished from mere information, and losing knowledge is a profound loss. Thus, losing a person is the ultimate loss (2005:385-386).

The standard interpretation of transhumanism emphasises rationality, and potentially disembodied consciousness as the defining essence of personhood. This understanding of personhood is similar to a Lockean understanding of personhood, which defines a person as:

a thinking intelligent being that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places, which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking, and, as it seems to me, essential to it ... (Locke 1690:318).

As already illustrated in the previous chapter, transhumanism subscribes to materialism. However, many materialists accept the reality of consciousness. According to materialists who accept the reality of consciousness, a person's life continues after natural bodily death if consciousness continues. Minds could be downloaded in another medium without loss of continuity of consciousness. Since personhood is defined in terms of rational capacities, it may include non-humans and exclude human beings. Thus, thinking animals and thinking machines (or spirits) could be included in the category of persons.

8.3 Implications of Enhancement for Personhood

This section argues that the human body is not essential to being a person according to both the standard interpretation of transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective. It contends that

individuals whose minds have been downloaded may not possess a particular human body but could be persons just like the living dead in the African tradition. It shows that, according to the standard interpretation of transhumanism, a person is essentially a pattern of information, so when the body dies and there is no other physical substrate to house the information, it causes the pattern to be lost forever. However, according to the *Botho* standpoint, a person is essentially immaterial and relational. This chapter therefore, argues that according to both the standard interpretation of transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective, body modification need not affect personhood because maintaining the mortal body is not essential to preserve the person.

It further asserts that, while the standard interpretation of transhumanism says a person is purely a mental entity that is fixed, the *Botho* perspective states that a person is a spiritual force that is fixed and essentially relational. Therefore, whereas the standard interpretation of transhumanism says that an individual ceases to be a person when enough of his or her brain has not continued to exist, the *Botho* perspective considers such an individual is a person if his or her spiritual force is fixed and other persons continue to relate with him/her as a person.

The transhumanism approach presupposes that an individual is not a person if s/he does not remember certain experiences. However, my study diverges from this as it holds that, even if an individual may not remember certain experiences, she or he would still possess the same spiritual force, and other persons would continue to relate with her or him as a person. For example, some family members would help the person to recall some forgotten experiences. The person is defined as distinct from the memories. Thus s/he is not her or his memories rather his or her memories belong to her/him. The *Botho* perspective is therefore somewhat

more philosophically attractive than the transhumanism approach. It is also apparent that personhood according to the *Botho* perspective does not require a body because belief in ancestral spirits suggests that there is something more to being a person beside the material body and the brain.

According to Nick Bostrom (2003:17), it matters little whether a human brain is implemented on a silicon chip inside a computer or in the gray, cheesy lump inside a skull, assuming both implementations are conscious. One possibility of mind uploading enhancement could be where an uploaded individual chooses to remain in cyber reality, whereby the brain is stimulated and the person exists in a virtual environment. This scenario is similar to the African traditional concept where the living dead exist without bodies. According to the Setswana tradition, the immaterial aspect persists through time; the person can survive the death of his or her body. It is not clear whether the ancestral spirits always put on different bodies, but it is believed that they retain their identity and possess heightened status, powers and qualities that surpass those of the current living (See the section “Advanced State after Death” in chapter 3). In a scenario similar to where the living dead continue relating with the living, the enhanced person could remain a person according to the *Botho* perspective (if her immaterial aspect and relationality continued).

Another possibility of mind uploading enhancement is cloning an entirely new body and transferring the information to the clone or to an entire silicon body. According to the standard interpretation of transhumanism, the one in the new body would be a person if it is self-conscious. This is similar to the African concept of reincarnation where the ancestral spirit inhabits a newborn baby, and the newborn baby is given the name of the person whose

spirit is believed to live inside him/her (Mbiti 1975:125-126). The Setswana perspective similarly holds that there is continuity of personhood in different physical bodies.

Improving the design of the human body through genetic enhancement and beauty surgery does not have to affect personhood. Individuals could reshape their bodies without losing their selves. Therefore, even if half of the human body was replaced through enhancement, s/he would remain a person. For instance, a person whose legs, arms, hands, and all other limbs are replaced could still remain a person. On one hand, according to transhumanism, rational, conscious electronic computers made of metal and silicon are persons. On the other hand, according to the *Botho* perspective, the gods and the living dead are persons because of the continuity of the immaterial aspect and the relationality.

Bostrom (2003) claims that through virtual reality, an uploaded individual could partake in all sensory experiences available to biological human-beings, such as enjoying food and drinks. “Uploads wouldn’t have to be confined to virtual reality; they could interact with people on the outside and even rent robot bodies in order to work in, or explore physical reality” (Bostrom 2003:18). An individual in the said scenario would be a person according to the *Botho* perspective because relationality is essential for personhood in this perspective. The living dead interact with the living daily. The living dead can eat, drink, advice and punish their family members, such relationships enable them to remain persons.

This study holds that some enhancements could improve normative personhood. Fayemi (2018) holds that human nature can be altered; he draws a link between this ontological aspect and transhumanism. Fayemi goes on to discuss the normative aspect of personhood. He argues that personhood is a process in which, through harmonious relationships, an

individual acquires moral virtues. Thus, the more one progresses morally, the more one's personhood grows. According to him, transhumanism and Afro-communitarianism are also compatible in regard to normative personhood. It is important to note that Fayemi addresses values and ideals that people should live up to, and these ideals are not advanced as what constitutes an individual as a person in the first place (something metaphysically distinct from an animal). He suggests that personhood comes only after a process. In contrast, this thesis contends that before a process, an individual is metaphysically a person if s/he possesses life force, and spirituality that are thought to house consciousness and relationality.

Chimakonam (2021:51-52), in examining Fayemi's normative personhood, argues that technologised personhood is engineered, whereas with normative personhood, an individual goes through the process of achieving, and succeeding or failing at it. Chimakonam suggests that individuals whose personhood is technologically given, would not be full persons according to Menkiti's account of normative personhood because they did not go through the process. In contrast, this thesis contends that metaphysical personhood has nothing to do with process because it is not acquired. What one acquires is moral character. A person cannot be defined only by what s/he acquires or does. Before the process, s/he is essentially a person, even if it is one that can still develop or become morally better.

In regards to enhancement, moral enhancement should not affect the immaterial that houses consciousness and relationality. The enhancement would only change the individual's psycho-social moral nature (Fayemi 2018). Moral enhancement would enhance cognition and increase one's awareness of relationships with other persons.

Radical forms of enhancement may produce automata. Automata are not persons, according to both transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective. They are unconscious, programmable

machines whose behaviour is determined. Descartes (1998:32), in his attempt to distinguish a machine or automata from a person, argues below that persons are free agents while machines are programmed.

The first of these is that they could never use words or other signs, composing them as people do in order to declare their thoughts to others. For people can certainly conceive of a machine, so constructed that it utters words, and even expresses some bodily actions that cause certain changes in its organs. For instance, if you touch it in one spot it asks what you want to say to it; if in another, it cries out that you are hurting it, and so on; but not that it arranges them [the words] diversely to respond to the meaning of everything said in its presence, as even the most stupid of men are capable of doing. Secondly, even though they might perform some things as well as or even better than human beings, they would inevitably fail in others, through which it would be discovered that they were acting, not through understanding but only from the disposition of their organs. For whereas reason is a universal instrument which can be of use in all kinds of situations, these organs need some particular disposition for each particular action; hence, it is impossible to conceive that there would be enough of them in a machine to make it act in all the occurrences of life in the way in which our reason makes us act.

An automaton or a machine does not have reasoning ability, consciousness, or self-awareness. It does not use language, does not have the ability to initiate action, and does not have moral agency or the ability to engage in moral judgments. However, these features are not essential for personhood according to *Botho*. Rather immateriality and relationality are necessary and sufficient criteria. These features would usually suggest the presence of the immaterial aspect, and the lack of these features would normally mean its absence. Hence, an

automaton would not be a person according to both the standard interpretation of transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective.

Even though transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective have similarities in their understanding of personhood, they have some notable differences. One case would be the existence of self-awareness without immateriality or relationality; for example, a conscious purely physical, isolated being. In this case, transhumanism holds that an individual with self-awareness without immateriality or relationality could be a person, whereas the *Botho* perspective would nullify such an individual's personhood. Persons do not just drop from the sky; persons are essentially birthed by parents and raised in a particular family. Therefore, a merely physical individual who does not have relational history with any person or family would not be a person. The *Botho* perspective provides a better or at least a plausible account of personhood, given this contrast.

Another case where transhumanism and *Botho* diverge would be the existence of immateriality and relationality but not consciousness. Regarding this case, transhumanism would nullify the personhood of an individual with immateriality and relationality but not consciousness. According to the *Botho* perspective, immateriality normally houses consciousness. However, even if a being lacks consciousness it could still be a person, for *Botho* if other human persons relate with him/her as the same person, and if it retains the same immaterial nature. Existence of immateriality and relationality therefore suggest that a being is a person. The *Botho* viewpoint is plausible in this regard.

8.4 Personal Identity

This section discusses what it means for a person to persist from one time to another or to be the same person at different times according to transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective as well as implications of biotechnological enhancement on personal identity with responses from the perspective of *Botho*. It shows that transhumanism is compatible with the *Botho* perspective because both perspectives agree that persons are more than mere material bodies and could in principle survive without their current body (both perspectives), or even the brain (both perspectives). Based on the *Botho* view, the human person can survive the death of his or her body, and become a living dead. Reducing the human person strictly to a material body therefore, negates the possibility of life after death. According to transhumanism, the persistent aspect is consciousness, while for the *Botho* perspective it is the spirit or life force that remains in relation to others.

This section advances that the immaterial aspect of the person, as determined by the *Botho* perspective, is not the contents of his or her mind, but rather a vital force or spiritual energy. A human person who has lost his or her memory through brain transplant, for instance, is sensibly identified by other people as the same person. They might say out his or her name and how they are related to him or her. Many African scholars, such as Leke Adeofe (2004), and Bisong (2014) dealt with the question of personal identity, under-considered relationality as one of the necessary and sufficient conditions for personal identity. That omission makes this study important.

Chimakonam (2011) holds that an individual continues to be the same person over time if there is continuity of the same physical body, and if the society can identify him/her as the same person. Thus, to him, personal identity resides in the material body plus relationality.

He suggests that a person would cease to exist after losing his or her body at death, meaning that the living dead in African tradition are not persons, and in fact do not even exist.

Bisong (2014), on the other hand holds that an individual continues to be the same person over time if there is continuity of rationality or consciousness. Bisong's position suggests that when an individual loses his or her memory, s/he ceases to be the same person; this is against the *Botho* viewpoint. This chapter demonstrates that *Botho* is at least plausible, if not more attractive.

8.4.1 *Botho*'s Approach to Personal Identity

Personal identity is the unique numerical identity of persons through time. This is to say, a theory of it specifies the necessary and sufficient conditions under which a person at one time and a person at another time can be said to be the same person, persisting through time. There is a relationship between personhood and personal identity in the *Botho* perspective. While metaphysical personhood answers the question, what a metaphysical person in general is, personal identity answers the question, what makes a particular person essentially who s/he is, and what makes a later specific person the same as the earlier person. The metaphysical features of a person, which persist from one time to another depend on the basic metaphysical nature of a person. Therefore, how one answers the question, "what it is to be a person" has implications on how one answers the question "what does it mean for a person to persist from one time to another"?

According to the *Botho* perspective, a person is essentially the immaterial aspect (life force) and relationality. These two features are necessary and sufficient criteria for a person over time as the same person (distinct from other persons). Metz (2018:216) explicates the sort of relation that constitutes personal identity in the *Botho* perspective.

Person X is numerically identical to person Y only if, and partially because, Y is presently in the same relationships as X. These relationships might be cognitive, emotive, and volitional, e.g., how one thinks about others and how they think of one, what one's attitudes are about others and what others' attitudes are about one, and how one's decisions affect others and how their decisions affect one.

This relationship involves children yet to be born, the living dead, nuclear and extended family members like parents, children, siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins. For example, the living and the living dead are related to one another, as if the living dead are still on earth because at death an individual carries along his or her personality. S/he would have the same name, likes and dislikes. His or her family know the kind of things that make him or her angry/sad/happy. His or her family will love him or her and communicate with him/her. S/he continues to play his or her role as a brother, sister, uncle, aunt, parent and grandparent.

According to the *Botho* perspective, the immaterial and relational aspects ensure continuity. Thus, the *Botho* standpoint upholds the immaterial over the physical body when it comes to continuity. This approach presupposes that the material or bodily continuity is not required for personal identity. Since the body is not a necessary and sufficient condition for personal identity, a person can continue to exist once the body is dead. The living dead or ancestors are therefore regarded as the same persons over time. This claim is reiterated by Mbiti (1975:124), who holds that the departed spirit after the death of the body, retains its personal name and identity, which ensures its continuation of life.

It is interesting to note that based on the *Botho* approach, thoughts and memories are only part of the spirit. Immateriality, therefore, does not only refer to consciousness, but also to the

notions of life force and spirituality. This means, we cannot choose thoughts and memories separately as the necessary features of personal identity. Further, identity, as specified by the *Botho* perspective, covers relationality. Therefore, a person who has lost consciousness does not lose his or her identity. The same argument could be applied to the concept of the living dead, who retain their identity not only through the continued persistence of their immateriality, but also by their relationship with the living.

8.4.2 Personal Identity According to Transhumanism

John Locke is a materialist philosopher who attributes personal identity to consciousness. His account aids in comprehending personhood from the perspective of transhumanism. He explains that consciousness is a necessary and sufficient criterion for personal identity (1690:319).

Derek Parfit (1984:208) interprets Locke as holding that consciousness or psychological continuity includes memory or mental contents.

Ray Kurzweil (2005) offers a “patternist” perspective as an alternative to the materialist account which reduces all biological and non-biological systems to patterns. According to him, a person is not to be identified primarily with his or her body, nor with a soul, but with “a pattern of matter and energy that persists over time” (2005: 383). Kurzweil argues that atoms and cells that comprise the body, change over the course of one’s life, so one’s identity cannot possibly be tied to the preservation of a particular body. He claims that a person has a fundamental identity that is distinct from the body. A person should therefore, associate his or her fundamental identity with the pattern of matter, and energy that s/he represents.

Hans Moravec (1988:117) similarly defines the essence of the person “...as the pattern and process going on in my head and body, not the machinery supporting that process. If the process is preserved, I am preserved. The rest is mere jelly”. Moravec is of the view that, if one retains the same mental structure and takes a different body, s/he remains the same person. The “new” person would normally have some of the same thoughts and memories as the “old” person. Similarly, Bostrom (2003:17) states that “... you survive so long as certain information patterns are conserved, such as your memories, values, attitudes, and emotional dispositions, and so long as there is causal continuity so that earlier stages of yourself help determine later stages of yourself”.

In sum, what largely identifies the human person as the same person at different times according to typical instances of transhumanism is the memory continuation. This thesis demonstrates that based on the *Botho* outlook, an individual does not have to remember everything that s/he has done or experienced, for him or her to be the same person at different times; other people may relate with him/her as the same person even if s/he lost her or his memories.

8.4.3 Implications of Enhancements for Personal Identity

This section discusses different types of enhancements, and state whether or not the enhanced person would remain the same person in accord with the *Botho* perspective. It illustrates that an individual with a different body, or no particular body could remain the same person in both the standard interpretation of transhumanism and the *Botho* viewpoint. It further establishes that, while in the standard interpretation of transhumanism an individual remains the same person only if s/he has psychological or mental continuity, in the *Botho* perspective s/he could remain the same person without psychological or mental continuity. It also

demonstrates that the *Botho* standpoint is philosophically plausible relative to the transhumanist perspective.

It continues to show that, based on the standard interpretation of transhumanism, there is a possibility of creating more copies of the self; this suggests that one person can be two or more at a time. The *Botho* perspective, however, does not have such implications for personal identity because it is not possible for one spirit to inhabit different bodies at the same time. The *Botho* view is more philosophically plausible in this respect. The biotechnological enhancement under discussion is cybernetic enhancement or enhancement by nano-technology.

According to Chimakonam (2011), personal identity is based on the society, which, in turn, means that the body is central. He contends that “for the definition of the self to be meaningful, it must make sense to others, because a person is meaningful only in relation to the society” (2011:200). Chimakonam holds that the correct definition of personal identity is bodily continuity. Thus, it is not what a person thinks, but what others see (*ibid*).

Chimakonam makes a metaphysical point about who continues to persist and is responsible for previous choices. He argues, “I may be convinced that I am a criminal but if others do not see me as such, I’m not. Similarly, no matter how good I think I am, if others see me as a criminal, that becomes my identity” (2011:200). He suggests that a kind of relationality is involved with identity not mere bodily continuity.

Chimakonam identifies personhood, and ultimately personal identity with the material body. He imagines himself undergoing mental surgery. The surgeon transplanted his mind into the body of Prof. C. S Momoh and the professor’s mind into his body. After the surgery, the

professor's body has Chimakonam's mind and Chimakonam's body has the professor's mind. He argues that even if the body that has the mind of the professor thinks he is Professor Mommoh other people will see it differently. That is to say, we are not what we think we are but what others say we are. According to Chimakonam, identity lies with the body, even if the body is given a new mind.

Chimakonam conflates being human, which requires a material body with being a person, which does not require a material body. This position is in contradiction with the African beliefs about the living dead. The living dead do not have bodies, yet they are referred to as persons and the same persons over time. Regarding enhancement, the "enhanced" individual whose mind has been downloaded and exists in a silicon body would not be the same person according to Chimakonam, whereas according to the *Botho* standpoint it is the same person if his or her immaterial aspect and relationships continue.

Another African scholar who examines personal identity in Yoruba is Leke Adeofe (2004). He states that the Yoruba are considered to have a tripartite conception of person. A person is a union of his or her *ara* (body), *emi* (mind/soul) and *ori* (inner head). The *ara* is physical while, the *emi* and *ori* are mental (spiritual (2004:2). He argues that for the Yoruba, personal identity is based on an individual's destiny, purpose, and roles. He is of the view that personal identity lies with the *ori*. *Ori* is an immaterial aspect which is responsible for an individual's personality, and is the bearer of human destiny. He maintains that:

My concern with personal identity is concern with my psychic unity, not my soul, unless I'm worried about the possibility of life after death. Concern with psychic unity is concern with the extent to which activities in my life fulfil a purpose. The purpose

in turn provides meaning to my life, and it is that meaning that evidence to my unity, that my life is on track (2004:13).

Adeofe (2004:10) explicates that the life that is lived consciously, and the purpose that emerges from it, provide psychic unity to the individual (*ibid*). If, for instance, I transfer my *ori* to my son, his personality would change, with changes in personality there is a likelihood of corresponding changes in social roles; and with social roles comes new social identities. He contends that transferring my *ori* does not violate my “human- beingness”, since the human identity would be preserved in the union of the body (*ara*) and the soul (*emi*). He argues that the *ori* is functionally isomorphic with the soul. He likens the concept to the Lockean mentalist approach and asserts that Locke regards the person as consciousness, and the body as the human being. Hence, when consciousness is transferred to another body, personal identity resides with the new body which now houses consciousness. Adeofe misses relationality as one of the criteria of personal identity. In accord with the *Botho* perspective, a person is essentially immaterial and relational.

According to the *Botho* perspective, change in personality and destiny, does not necessarily result in a change in personal identity. An individual’s personality is shaped by genes and environmental influences. Through gene enhancement or moral enhancement, an individual may change some undesirable traits like hot temper, friendliness, or self-control during emotionally charged situations. Similarly, a person who is born a chief, and socialised to be a chief may decide to alter his or her destiny by joining politics instead. A change in personality and destiny does not result in a change of personal identity based on the *Botho* standpoint, and plausibly not.

Bisong (2014) argues against Chimakonam's criterion of personal identity. He states that "if the physical body is the seat of personal identity, then personal identity inevitably ends at death, and thereby man cannot be a being unto eternity" (2014:57). He holds that personal identity resides in consciousness and not in the body. He explains that the body houses consciousness, "to attribute identity to the physical body is to confuse a person for a man. The identity of a man is the physical body, but the identity of persons is consciousness" (2014:57). Bisong's understanding of personal identity is similar to Locke's view, which has greatly influenced transhumanism. The *Botho* perspective in contrast states that personal identity lies in the immaterial spirit that is thought to house consciousness plus relationality. The *Botho* perspective identifies the immaterial aspect as something other than the contents of the mind, but rather something like a spiritual force. As explored in the discussion, Bisong and transhumanism differ with the *Botho* perspective where an individual loses his memory in the process of enhancement. While the *Botho* perspective states that such an individual is, or at least could be, the same person, Bisong, like transhumanism, would say s/he is definitely not the same person.

During mind uploading, some individuals could discard their bodies, and such individuals would remain the same persons according to both the standard interpretation of transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective. Similarly, the belief in life after death that is linked with the *Botho* perspective is incompatible with reducing persons to material bodies.

Some "enhanced persons" may feel that they have continued to be the same person after the uploading process while others might not. That is, s/he might be designed to closely imitate memories, skills, personality, and knowledge of the original person, while some might not. If the memory of the enhanced individual persisted, transhumanism would say it is the same

person. According to the *Botho* perspective, what constitutes personal identity is the immaterial aspect (spirit) and relationality. Supposing the brain is damaged, and the person does not remember his or her life, his or her plans and intentions, the *Botho* standpoint would consider that person the same person because according to this viewpoint, a human person is more than just a stream of consciousness. Even if s/he has lost her/his memory, other human persons in his community and his family would relate with him/her as the same person. For instance, they will call him/her by his or her name. The *Botho* perspective is more plausible in this respect.

Based on the *Botho* view the cessation of consciousness would not result in the formation of a new individual person. For example, an individual person who develops amnesia from some organic trauma might be considered the same person. People would call her/him by the same name, her/his family would visit and wish for her/his recovery and no new birth certificate or passport would be issued. The *Botho* perspective would consider an “enhanced person” who is not conscious of him/herself after the uploading process of the same person. According to the *Botho* perspective, such an enhanced person would be the same person if s/he is relational and s/he has the same spiritual nature.

Bostrom (2003) discusses the possibilities regarding uploading, the first of which is concerned with the probability that uploading could entail a process whereby the original biological brain of the individual choosing to upload does not survive. The second possibility is that the original brain or biological entity would be preserved (*ibid*). Supposing that the original biological brain of the individual choosing to upload survives death, there could be copies of the same person. Since the person does not have to be connected to a particular physical body to be the same person, if the pattern is preserved in different copies, there would be copies of the same person. This position is counterintuitive.

The *Botho* perspective, in contrast, argues that the immaterial aspect, plus continuity of relationships, ensures personal identity over time. As specified by the *Botho* outlook, the spirit of a human person can inhabit the body of a new-born child (Mbiti 1975:125-126). Mbiti explains that when features, characteristics and personality of the spirit of the living dead are noticed in a newly born baby, then people would say so and so has come back (*ibid*). In most cases, the new-born child is given the name of the person whose spirit has inhabited his or her body. Mbiti goes on to explicate that in some African societies, a person can have two spirits. This belief suggests that the spirits of one person can inhabit the bodies of two different persons. However, in the *Botho* perspective, a person has only one spirit. Furthermore, the spirit of one person cannot inhabit different bodies at the same time. Ideally, identifying one person as the same person at the same time would therefore not be problematic, as determined by the *Botho* perspective.

According to both the standard interpretation of transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective, body modification, alteration and replacement need not affect personhood or personal identity. The person could be the same person. What makes such an individual the same person, according to the standard interpretation of transhumanism is his or her continued consciousness, while, for the *Botho* perspective, it is the continued immaterial aspect and relationality. This study has provided reasons that favour the *Botho* perspective considering the discovery that transhumanism tends to fall short of other characteristics that complete the concepts of person and personal identity. For example, whereas transhumanism presupposes that an individual is not a person if s/he does not remember certain experiences, *Botho* holds that such an individual is a person because s/he would still possess the same spiritual force, and other persons would continue to relate with her/him as a person. This scenario renders the

transhumanism view of a person doubtful, or even downright false. In another example, of personal identity, transhumanism presupposes that there is a possibility of creating more copies of the self. However, the *Botho* perspective does not have such implications for personal identity because it is not possible for one spirit to inhabit different bodies at the same time. It is logically problematic for one person to be identical with two or more people at the same time. This scenario proves the inadequacy of the transhuman approach.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has used the *Botho* concept to analyse and hypothesise on the personhood and personal identity of enhanced persons, particularly their materiality, immateriality and relationality. This is in fulfillment of the study's main objective, which is to examine biotechnological enhancements metaphysically. Using the *Botho* lens, this chapter has argued that the loss of materiality does not necessarily entail the loss of personality, meaning that an individual can remain a person even after bodily death, or would be considered a person even if his or her body is transformed or replaced. Both transhumanism and the *Botho* perspective distinguish and separate the essence of a person from the body. Substituting the human body for an artificial one should not affect personhood. One of the significant examples discussed is mind uploading where the human mind would be uploaded onto a computerized container. The discussion has also shown instances where the *Botho* perspective and transhumanism diverge. For example, whereas transhumanism ascribes personhood to the existence of self-awareness without immateriality or relationality, the *Botho* perspective does not. Another example is the existence of immateriality and relationality without consciousness. The *Botho* standpoint ascribes personhood to the said case while transhumanism does not. The discussion has also shown where other works which discuss "personal identity" are inadequate when it comes to either understanding the African tradition or having a philosophically attractive view. The chapter has further demonstrated that *Botho* is a novel

perspective on both the African notions of personal identity and the implications of enhancements in an African context. Thus, *Botho* is preferable to transhumanism regarding personal identity.

Chapter 9: Implications of Enhancement for Morality with Summary and Conclusions

The previous few chapters (chapters 6-8) examined the metaphysical aspects of *Botho*.

Unlike literature addressing African ethics and enhancements, these chapters discussed how transhumanism bears on freewill, human nature, personhood, and personal identity. This chapter gives a summary and a conclusion on how transhumanism interacts with these metaphysical aspects of the *Botho* perspective. It further reflects on the metaphysical claims drawn in the previous chapters by suggesting some moral conclusions that this study has not yet exploited. It discusses which enhancements are morally impermissible according to *Botho*. Lastly, it recapitulates the study's significance.

The general conclusion of this study is that the metaphysical aspect of *Botho* is not applicable to certain forms of transhumanism in relation to freewill and the material and immaterial aspects of human nature. Examples of enhancements that could be consistent with *Botho*'s accounts freewill, human nature, and personhood, consider manipulating the body's machinery to produce desirable genes. This can be done by adding genes to the human genome (if they do not exist already). If they already exist in the human genome but are not expressed, they could be activated. Another example is cloning, where a woman may give birth to a genetic copy of herself, spouse or deceased family. This could be done by implanting one's genes into an unborn child. Another example is the introduction of additional pigments into the genetic makeup of individuals to improve their hair, skin and eye colour. It is an open question, for all I have said so far, whether these enhancements would be morally desirable.

Another example of enhancements that could be consistent with *Botho*'s metaphysics is replacing healthy body parts with artificial, mechanical or genetically engineered prostheses.

The fusion of human and electronic technology would lead to the formation of a hybrid known as a cyborg. The extension of the human body parts and its function could improve its performance or extend its life span.

Replacing the human body with superior genes or replacing biological systems with mechanical systems need not affect human nature or other metaphysical aspects of *Botho*. Similarly, if the human mind is transferred to a new human body, the person would remain a human as per *Botho*.

However, there are some form of enhancements which could replace human nature. For example, uploading minds from physical bodies and brains into a new type of computer. The enhanced individual would exist without the limitation of a physical, organic body. The enhanced individual could choose to remain in cyber-reality. If the mind existed without the body in cyberspace, it would no longer be human but it could be a person (if its life force and relationships remain).

Regarding freewill and knowledge capabilities, the study has established that cognitive enhancement could improve both. Some pharmacological enhancements like modafinil could improve cognitive capabilities like memory, mental aspects or and consciousness. Through the use of gene enhancement, embryos could be selected for intelligence. Mind uploading would allow consciousness to be backed up and sustained in forms far more durable than the human body. This consciousness could then be improved. Improved consciousness would produce virtually infinite and unlimited knowledge since available information would be continually reassessed. Improved knowledge suggests that enhanced individuals could make

informed choices. Enhanced individuals would be free to explore, to think and to create. An improved consciousness could also confer a unique moral standing on enhanced individuals.

However, enhancing an individual to a point where s/he becomes an automaton /robot would destroy his or her capacity to acquire knowledge and to choose freely. For instance enhancement could produce conscious, sentient, intelligent machines/robots that lack materiality and immateriality. These machines/robots could be programmed or behaviourally determined with set of rules regarding their morality hence not free. These machines/robots would be neither humans nor persons.

The study has, however, demonstrated that the metaphysical aspect of *Botho* is consistent with some radical forms of transhumanism regarding knowledge acquisition, personhood, and personal identity. Whereas radical enhancement may affect being human or human nature, it would not necessarily affect personhood or personal identity and it would not limit knowledge capability. However, a conscious machine without immateriality and relation would not be a person. About personal identity, a posthuman could be the same person through time if s/he retains the immaterial aspect and relationships. Further, a posthuman could still acquire knowledge and his or her knowledge capability could be enhanced. A posthuman could also be free to develop his or her moral personhood.

In addition to the metaphysical issues, there are some moral conclusions that can be drawn from this study. Recall that the moral aspects of *Botho* raise and answer questions concerning right, wrong, social norms and reasons for acting one way or another. When a person is behaving according to how they ought to behave for example, they are said to have *Botho*; if they behave immorally, they are said to have no *Botho*. According to Gaie (2007), the theory

of *Botho* shares some characteristics with other moral theories, and it can be applied to morality just like other moral theories. Hence, the ethical aspect of *Botho* is applied in this chapter to assess human acts as either being morally wrong or right.

As already mentioned from chapter 5 *Botho* emphasises the need for relationships and the concern for others. That is, an individual is truly human when s/he establishes humane relations with other human beings. For example, whereas it is *Botho* to work together to ensure the wellbeing of the whole community, it is not *Botho* to let a member of a community suffer if the community could assist.

Recall that *Botho* is also employed in reference to virtue. An individual with virtue in the *Botho* ethics is sympathetic, kind, loving, friendly, caring, sharing, respectful and compassionate. According to Broodryk (2008:17), *Botho* values are geared towards ensuring a happy and qualitative community life in the spirit of family.

Enhancement is consistent with freedom in the *Botho* perspective. An individual in the *Botho* perspective is viewed as capable of making informed choices regarding the decision of whether to enhance himself/herself or not. Thus, the human persons are not helplessly subject to the society's rules, but retain their individual freedom of choice. This kind of freedom is necessary to a human person's sense of moral responsibility. Freedom suggests that an individual is allowed to manifest his or her capacity to become a virtuous person. Growth or process of personhood depends mostly on others. An individual could therefore, become a good person through the community and the community could become a good society through its individual members. Allowing individuals freedom would promote their dignity.

Enhancement also suggests the individual's ability for rationality which is acknowledged by the *Botho* perspective. Being rational suggests that human persons can make informed choices about whether or not to enhance themselves, which traits to enhance and the extent or degree to which the enhancing should be done. Rationality also implies acting with self-control, having the ability to assess the reasons for or against enhancement and making rational decisions. Morality depends on making rational choices. For example, enhanced individuals would choose to participate with others on a co-operative basis and help each other out of sympathy.

Transhumanism need not erode important human values, such as empathy for others. Moral requirements in the *Botho* perspective are nothing more than a product of the community itself. This means that, even though the individual person is free, his or her freedom is limited to some extent by moral obligations and laws. S/he makes decisions not as a separate individual, but as a participant in the community. The decision to enhance oneself would involve consulting and considering others, so that an individual may be well advised. Therefore, as long as the human community exists, laws will be in place to protect the wellbeing of human persons. The law and the ethical reflection of *Botho* would promote solidarity. People would, therefore, seek the good of others and the community.

In response to the fear that enhancement would exacerbate the already marked inequalities between the rich and the poor, the Setswana tradition has practices such as *mafisa*, *majako*, *molaletsa*, and *letsema* which show that the *Botho* perspective constitutes moral virtues of love and compassion (see chapter 5). In the context of transhumanism, the community would come up with initiatives such as public funding to ensure that the disadvantaged members of the community have access to enhancements.

Enhancing children with genes that allow superior athletic performance, longevity, better cognition, eliminating genes for criminality, and so forth is consistent with *Botho* because it would not only benefit the individual but the whole community. Enhancing longevity through either gene enhancement or nano-technology would promote relationships among family members. Individuals would be happy to have their parents live longer. Living longer would also allow individuals to contribute to the society with their wisdom and talents. Furthermore, since normative personhood is not fixed, increase in lifespan would suggest increase in chances to acquire full personhood. Cognitive and emotive enhancement through either gene, pharmaceutical or nano-technology would improve areas of emotive and cognitive functioning, both of which could be helpful in restoring communal harmony.

It would not be wrong to enhance an individual if s/he remains either a human or a person. For example, altering, replacing, or removing some material aspect would not substantially affect human nature. However, removing the entire human body could substantially affect human nature, yet retain the person and so in this case enhancement might not be objectionable. Both human beings and persons have the capacity for relationships. Therefore, enhancing an individual to a degree where s/he remains either a human or a person would not threaten human relationships. Thus, the enhanced individual would interact with people in a human way. However, it would be wrong according to the *Botho* perspective if an individual becomes an automaton. As seen from previous chapters, an automaton is neither a human being nor a person. Further an automaton is no longer free; hence it is unable to develop its (moral) personhood. Furthermore, an automaton would no longer be able to acquire knowledge; therefore, it would not make informed moral decisions. Lastly, an automaton lacks immateriality in relation. Enhancing an individual to a degree where s/he becomes an

automaton would be morally wrong in light of the *Botho* perspective because such individuals would lack the capacity to engage in relationships. They would also lack the ability to love others, and the human dignity which is rooted in the human capacity for relationships.

This study has covered the metaphysical distinction of personhood, which is not tackled by most of the works that discuss the communitarian aspect of *Botho* or personhood. African scholars who deal with metaphysical concepts like freewill, human nature, personhood and personal identity do not discuss them in the context of transhumanism. A few scholars who discuss transhumanism in the African perspective focus only on the moral aspects.

Furthermore, African scholars who discuss personal identity leave out relationality as one of the necessary and sufficient conditions for a person's continued existence. Therefore, this research contributes a new African voice to the metaphysical concepts of enhancement.

Bibliography

- Abdul, O. (2019). Advancing Neutral Monism in Big History and Transhumanist Philosophy. In Lee, N., ed., *The Transhumanism Handbook*. Cham. Springer International Publishing. Pp. 717-740.
- Abimbola, W. (1971). The Yoruba Concept of Human Personality. In *La notion de Personne en Afrique Noire*. Colloques Internationales de Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (544). Pp. 69-85.
- Abimbola, W. (1975). Iwapele: The Concept of Good Character in Ifa Literary Corpus. In Abimbola, W. *Yoruba Oral Tradition*. Ibadan. University of Ibadan. Pp. 389-420.
- Abimbola, W. (1976). *IFA: An Exposition of Ifa Literary Corpus*. Ibadan. Oxford University Press.
- Adeofe, L. (2004). Personal Identity in African Metaphysics. In Brown, L. M., ed., *African Philosophy: New and Traditional Perspectives*. New York. Oxford University Press. Pp. 1-13.
- Agada, A., ed. (2002). *Ethnophilosophy and the Search for the Wellspring of African Philosophy*. Cham. Springer.
- Agar, N. (2004). *Liberal Eugenics: In Defense of Human Enhancement*. Hoboken. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Agar, N. (2010). *Humanity's End; Why We Should Reject Radical Enhancement*. Cambridge, Massachusetts. MIT Press.
- Ajei, M. (2007). *African's Development: The Imperatives of Indigenous Knowledge and Value*. PhD Thesis. University of South Africa.
- Amanze, J. N. (2002). *African Traditional Religions and Culture in Botswana*. Gaborone. Pula Press.

- Andersen, M, Schjoedt, U, Nielbo, K.L and Sorensen, J. (2014). *Mystical Experience in the Lab*. In Horii, M and Ramey, S. *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*. Leiden. Koninklijke Brill Nv. Pp. 217-245.
- Anyanwu, K. C. (1981). *The African World-view and Theory of Knowledge*. In Ruch, E. A. & Anyanwu, K. C. *African Philosophy: An Introduction to the Main Philosophical Trends in Contemporary African*. Rome. Catholic Book Agency. Pp. 77-99.
- Appiah, K. A. (1998). *African Traditional Religions*. In Craig, E., ed., *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London. Routledge.
- Appiah, K. A. (2004). *Akan and Euro – American Concepts of the Person*. In Brown, L. M., ed., *African Philosophy: New and Traditional Perspectives*. New York. Oxford University Press. Pp. 21-34.
- Audi, R. (ed.). (1999). *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (2nd edition). New York. Cambridge University Press.
- Bahji, S. (2018). *Globalisation and the Transhumanist Identities*. *Journal of Futures Studies* 22(3). Pp. 85-92.
- Barnhart, C.L. & Barnhart, R.K. (eds.). (1990). *The World Book Dictionary*. Chicago. World Book.
- Bateman, S. Gayon, J. Allouche, S., Goffette, J. & Marzano, M. (eds). (2015). *Inquiring into Human Enhancement. Interdisciplinary and International Perspectives*. London. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bell, R.H. (2002). *Understanding African Philosophy*. New York. Routledge.
- Bernal, J.D. (1929). *The World, the Flesh, and the Devil: An Enquiry into the Future of the Three Enemies of the Rational Soul*. Bloomington. Indiana University Press.
- Bewaji, J.A.I. (2007). *An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge: A Pluricultural Approach*. Ibadan. Hope Publication.

- Bisong, P.B. (2014). Jonathan O. Chimakonam's Concept of Personal Identity: A Critical Reflection. *Filosofia Theoretica: Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and Religions* 3(1). Pp. 50-66.
- Boettner, L. (2015). *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*. West Linn. Monergism Books.
- Bostrom, N. (2003). *The Transhumanist FAQ*. Version 2.1.
nickbostrom.com/views/transhumanist.pdf [Accessed 24 October 2022].
- Bostrom, N. (2005a). A History of Transhumanist Thought. *Journal of Evolution and Technology* 14(1). Pp. 1-25.
- Bostrom, N. (2005b). Transhumanist Values. *Journal of Philosophical Research* 30(12). Pp.53-63.
- Bostrom, N. (2005c). In Defence of Posthuman Dignity. *Bioethics* 19(3). Pp. 202-214.
- Bostrom, N. (2008). Dignity and Enhancement. In Schulman, A and Merrill, W.T., eds., *Human Dignity and Bioethics: Essays Commissioned by the President's Council on Bioethics*. Washington D.C. Government Printing Office. Pp. 173-207.
- Botswana Government. (1997). *Vision 2016: Long Term Vision of Botswana*. Gaborone. Botswana Government.
- Broodryk, J. (2008). *Understanding South Africa: The Ubuntu Way of Living*. Pretoria. Ubuntu School of Philosophy.
- Brown, T. (1926). *Among the Bantu Nomads*. New York. Negro University Press.
- Buchanan, A. (2011). *Better than Human. The Promise and Perils of Enhancing Ourselves*. Oxford. Oxford University Press.
- Buchanan, A., Brock, D.W., Daniels, N. & Wikler, D. (eds.). (2009). *From Chance to Choice Genetics and Justice*. New York. Cambridge University Press.

- Byaruhanga-Akiiki, A.B.T. (1985). Tswana Religion Vis-a vis World Religions. In *Religion in Botswana Project 9*. Gaborone. University of Botswana.
- Cabrera, Y. L. (2015). *Rethinking Human Enhancement Social Enhancement and Emergent Technologies*. London. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chilisa, B. & Preece, J. (2005). *Research Methods for Adult Educators in Africa*. Hamburg. UNESCO Institution for Education.
- Chimakonam, J. O. (2011). Mental Surgery: Another Look at the Identity Problem. *Filosofia Theoretica* 1(1). Pp. 195-208.
- Chimakonam, J. O. (2017). The Question of African Logic: Beyond Apologia and Polemics. In Afolayan, A. and Falola, F. (eds.). *The Palgrave Handbook of African Philosophy*. New York. Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. 105-128.
- Chimakonam, A. E. (2021). Transhumanism in Africa: A Conversation with Ademola Fayemi on his Afrofuturistic Account of Personhood. *Arumaruka: Journal of Conversational Thinking* 1(2). Pp. 42-56.
- Coeckelbergh, M. (2013). *Human Being @ Risk Enhancement, Technology, and the Evaluation of Vulnerability Transformations*. Cham. Springer International Publishing.
- Cowburn, J. (2008). *Freewill, Predestination and Determinism*. Milwaukee. Marquette University Press.
- De Grey, A. (2007). *Ending Aging: The Rejuvenation Breakthroughs that Could Reverse Human Aging in Our Lifetime*. New York. St Martin's Press.
- De Grey, A. (2008). Reasons and Methods for Promoting Our Duty to Extend Healthy Life Indefinitely. *Journal of Evolution and Technology* 18(1). Pp. 50-55.
- De Gruchy, J.W. (2006). *Being Human*. London. SCM Press.
- Descartes, R. (1998). *Discourse on Method and the Meditations on First Philosophy* (4th edition). Trans. Cress, D. Indianapolis. Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

- Dieguez, A. & Veliz, C. (2017). *Would Moral Enhancement Limit Freedom?* Cham. Springer International Publishing.
- Doede, B. (2009). *Transhumanism, Technology, and the Future: Posthumanity Emerging or Sub-Humanity Descending? Transhumanism, Technology, and the Future: Posthumanity Emerging or Sub-Humanity Descending?* 7(3). Pp. 39-54.
- Dolamo, R. (2013). *Botho/Ubuntu: The Heart of African Ethics. Scriptura* 112(1). Pp. 1-10.
- Drexler, E. (1986). *Engines of Creation: The Coming Era of Nanotechnology*. New York. Anchor Books.
- Dube, W. M, Gabaitse, R.M, Kebaneilwe, M, Kgalemang, M, Madigele, T, Modie-Moroka, T, Mmolai, S, Motswapong, E.P, Ntloedibe, S, Sesiro, D. Setume, S. D (2016). *Botho/Ubuntu: Community Building and Gender Constructions in Botswana. Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*. 42(1). Pp. 1-21.
- Du Toit, C. (2005). *Implications of a Technoscientific Culture on Personhood in Africa and in the West*. Research Institute for Theology and Religion. University of South Africa.
- Ejikemeuwa, N. J. O. (2014). Nature and Function of Logic in African Epistemology. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 19(11). Pp. 295-320.
- Ekanola, E. A. (2006). A Naturalistic Interpretation of the Yoruba Concepts of Ori. *Philosophia Africana* 9(1). Pp. 41-52.
- Ewuoso, C. and Fayemi, A.K. (2021). Transhumanism and African Humanism: How to Pursue the Transhumanist Vision Without Jeopardising Humanity. In *Bioethics*. 35(7). Pp. 634-645.
- Eze, E. C. (1998). The Problem of Knowledge in Divination: The Example of Ifa. In Eze, C. E., ed., *African Philosophy: An Anthology*. Malden, MA. Blackwell Publishers. Pp. 173–175.

- Fakoya, A. A. (2008). The Pragmatic Import of 'Ori' in Yoruba Conversational Discourse. *Acta Linguistica* 3(1). Pp. 54-88.
- Fayemi, A. K. (2018). Personhood in a Transhumanist Context: An African Perspective. *Filosofia Theoretica* 7(1). Pp. 53-78.
- Fukuyama, F. (2002). *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution*. New York. Farrar Strauss and Giroux.
- Gaie, J. B. R. (2007). The Setswana Concept of *Botho*: Unpacking the Metaphysical and Moral Aspects. In Gaie, J. B. R. & Mmolai, S.K., eds., *The Concept of Botho and HIV/AIDS in Botswana*. Eldoret. Zapf Chancery. Pp. 29-44.
- Gathogo, J. (2008). African Philosophy as Expressed in the Concepts of Hospitality and Ubuntu. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 130 (39). Pp. 39-53.
- Gbadegesin, S. (1983). Destiny, Personality and the Ultimate Reality of Human Existence: A Yoruba Perspective. A paper presented at the second perennial meeting of the Institute of Ultimate Reality and Meaning in Toronto, Canada, August.
- Gbadegesin, S. (1991). *African Philosophy: Traditional Yoruba Philosophy and Contemporary African Realities*. New York. Peter Lang.
- Gbadegesin, S. (1998). Eniyan: The Yoruba Concept of a Person. In Coetzee, P.H & Roux, A. P. J., eds., *The African Philosophy Reader*. London. Routledge. Pp. 59-68.
- Glannon, W. (2012). Neuroscience's Threat to FreeWill. In Tirosh-Samuels, H. and Mossman, K.L., eds., *Building Better Humans? Refocusing the Debate on Transhumanism*. Oxford. Peter Lang. Pp. 335-353.
- Grant, A. S. (2019). Will Human Potential Carry Us Beyond Human? A Humanistic Inquiry into Transhumanism. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 59(1). Pp.1-15.
- Guma, S.M. (1967). *The Form Content and Technique of Traditional Literature in Southern Sotho*, Pretoria. The Hiddingh Currie Publications of the University of South Africa.

- Gyekye, K. (1987). *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (1st ed.), Philadelphia. Temple University Press. Pp. 154-163.
- Gyekye, K. (1992). Person and Community in African Thought. In Coetzee P.H., ed., *The Struggle for Reason in Africa, from Philosophy from Africa: A Text with Readings*. Oxford. University Press. Pp. 297-312.
- Gyekye, K. (1996). *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*. Accra. Sankofa Publishing Co.
- Habermas, J. (2003). *The Future of Human Nature*. Cambridge. Polity Press.
- Habermas, J. and Cronin, C. (2008). *Between Naturalism and Religion*. New York. Polity Press.
- Haldane, J.B.S. (1924). *Daedalus of Science and the Future*. New York. E.P Dutton and Company.
- Hambira. R. (2001). *Institution, Organisation and Botho, Religion and Youth*. Paper Presented at a Youth Conference. Gaborone.
- Harris, J. (2007). *Enhancing Evolution: The Ethical Case for Making Better People*. Princeton. Princetown University Press.
- Harrison-Barbet, A. N. (1990). *Mastering Philosophy*. London. Macmillan.
- Hawley, K. (2017). Applied Metaphysics. In Lippert-Rasmussen, K., Brownlee, K., Coady, D., eds., *A Companion of Applied Philosophy* (1st edition). New York. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. Pp. 165-179.
- Higgs, P. (2011). African Philosophy and the Decolonisation of Education in Africa. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44(2). Pp. 37-55.
- Hofmann. B. (2017). Limits to Human Enhancement: Nature. Disease, Therapy or Betterment? *BMC Medical Ethics* 18(56). Pp. 2-11

- Honderich, T. (2005.) *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (2nd ed). New York. Oxford University Press.
- Hopkins, D. N. (2005). *Being Human, Race, Culture, Religion*. Minneapolis. Fortress press.
- Hughes, J. (2004). *Citizen Cyborg: Why Democratic Societies Must Respond to the Redesigned Human of the Future*. Cambridge. Westview Press.
- Hume, D. (1955). *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Hendel, C. W., ed. New York. The Bobbs-Merrill.
- Huxley, A. (1932). *Brave New World*. London. Vintage Books.
- Huxley, J. (1957). Transhumanism. In *Huxley, J: New Bottles for New Wine*. London. Chat to & Windus. Pp. 13-17.
- Idowu, E. B. (1962). *Oludumare: God in Yoruba Belief*. London. Longmans.
- John, E. O. (2009). African Epistemology. In Uduigwomen, A.F., ed., *From Footmarks to Landmarks on African Philosophy* (2nd edition). Lagos. O.O.P. Ltd.
- Kant, I. (1991). *The Moral Law. Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Translated by Paton, J.H. London. Routledge.
- Kass, L. (2002). *Life, Liberty, and Defense of Dignity: The Challenge for Bioethics*. San Francisco. Encounter Books.
- Kayange, G. M. (2018). *Meaning and Truth in African Philosophy: Doing African Philosophy with Language*. Cham. Springer International Publishing.
- Kayange, G. M. (2021). *The Question of Being in Western and African Analytic Metaphysics. Comparative Metaphysics Using the Analytic Framework*. Cham. Springer International Publishing.
- Kessler, E. G. (1992). *Voices of Wisdom: A Multicultural Philosophy Reader*. Belmont. Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Kurzweil, R. (1990). *The Age of Intelligent Machines*. Cambridge. MIT Press.

- Kurzweil, R. (2000). *The Age of Spiritual Machines: When Computers Exceed Human Intelligence*. London. Penguin.
- Kurzweil, R. (2001). *The Law of Accelerating Returns*. Available:
<https://www.kurzweilai.net/the-law-of-accelerating-returns> [Accessed 29th June 2021].
- Kurzweil, R. (2003). *Human Body Version 2.0*. Available:
<https://www.kurzweilai.net/human-body-version-20> [Accessed 29th June 2021].
- Kurzweil, R. (2005). *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*. New York. Penguin.
- Lee, N. (2019). *The Transhumanism Handbook*. Cham. Springer International Publishing.
- Letebele, M. J. (2019). *Customs, Beliefs and Christianity Within the Life of the Bakgatla Ba Moseitlha*.
https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/71377/Letebele_Customs_2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y [Accessed 24 October 2022]
- Lippert-Rasmussen, K. (2017). The Nature of Applied Philosophy. In Lippert-Rasmussen, K., Brownlee, K., Coady, D., eds., *A Companion of Applied Philosophy* (1st edition). New York. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. Pp. 3-17.
- Locke, J. (1690). *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Yorton, J., ed. New York. Dutton.
- Mackenzie, J. (1971). *Ten Years North of the Orange River*. London. Frank Cass.
- Mapadimeng, M.S. (2007). Ubuntu/Botho, the Work Place and ‘Two Economies’. *Africanus* 37(2). Pp. 257-271.
- Matolino B. (2008). *The Concept of Person in African Political Thought: An Analytic and Evaluative Study*. Pietermaritzburg. University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.
- Matumo, Z. (1993). *Setswana-English, English- Setswana Dictionary*. Gaborone. Macmillan.

- Mbaegbu, C. C. (2016). The Mind Body Problem: The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy, *Journal of Religion and Human Relations* 8(2). Pp. 1-18.
- Mbiti, J. (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy* (1st ed.). Nairobi. Heinemann Educational Books.
- Mbiti, J. S. (1975). *Introduction to African Religion*. Bloomington. University of Indiana Press.
- Mbozi, A. (unpublished paper). *From 'I am Because You Are Rational' to 'I am Because You Commune': An Ubuntu African-based Double Dignity Grandnorm of Moderate Cosmopolitanism*.
- McNamee, M. J. & Edwards, S. D. (2006). Transhumanism, Medical Technology and Slippery Slopes. *Journal of Medical Ethics*. 32(9). Pp. 513-518.
- McVeigh, M. J. (1974). *God in Africa: Conceptions of God in African Traditional Religion and Christianity*. Cape Cod, MA. Claude Stark.
- Menkiti, I. (1984). Person and Community in African Traditional Thought, In Wright, R.A. (ed). *African Philosophy: An Introduction*. New York. University Press of America. Pp.171-181.
- Metz, T. (2007). Toward an African Moral Theory. *The Journal of Political Philosophy*. 15(3). Pp. 321-341.
- Metz, T. (2011). Ubuntu as a Moral Theory and Human Rights in South Africa. *African Human Rights Law Journal* 11(2). Pp. 532-559.
- Metz, T. (2018). What Is the Essence of an Essence? Comparing Afro-Relational and Western-Individualist Ontologies. *Synthesis Philosophica* 65(1). Pp. 209-224.
- Metz, T. & Gaie, J. (2010). The African Ethic of Ubuntu/Botho: Implications for Research on Morality. *Journal of Moral Education* 39(3). Pp. 273-290.

- Miller, P and Wilsdon, J. (eds.). (2006). *From Smart Pills to Designer Babies and Extended Life Spans, Technology Now Promises to Transform our Very Nature ...Better Humans? The Politics of Human Enhancement and Life Extension*. New York. Demos.
- Mmualefhe, O.D. (2007). *Botho and HIV/AIDS: A Theological Reflection*. In Gaie, J.B. R and Mmolai, S.K. (eds.), *The Concept of Botho and HIV/AIDS in Botswana*. Eldoret. Zapf Chancery, Pp. 1-26.
- Mnyaka, M & Motlhabi M. (2009). Ubuntu and its Socio-Moral Significance. In M.F. Murove, ed., *African Ethics: An Anthology of Comparative and Applied Ethics*. Pietermaritzburg. University of KwaZulu-Natal Press. Pp. 63-84.
- Moffat, R. (1842). *Missionary Labours in Southern Africa*. London. John Shaw.
- Mogapi, K. (1984). *Thutapuo Ya Setswana*. Lobatse. Longman.
- Mogapi, K. (1985). *Ngwao Ya Setswana*. Gaborone. Sikwane Publishers.
- Mokgoro, Y. (1998). Ubuntu and Law in South Africa. *Buffalo Human Rights Law Review* 4(1). Pp. 14-26.
- Molefe, M. (2016). A Critique of Kwasi Wiredu's Humanism and Impartiality. *Acta Academica* 48(1). Pp. 91-110.
- Molefe, M. (2017). Individualism in African Moral Cultures. *International Journal of Philosophy of Culture and Axiology* 14(2).Pp. 49-68.
- Molefe, M. (2022). *Human Dignity in African Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*. Cham. Springer International Publishing.
- Moloto, E. S. & Molao, S. J. (1975). *Bua Ka Tolamo: Fomo 2*. Mafikeng. Varia Books.
- Moravec, H. (1988). *Mind Children: The Future of Robot and Human Intelligence*. London. Harvard University Press.
- Muyambo, M. & Maposa, R.S. (2013). The Post-Burial Rite of Kusemendera Guwa in the Indigenous Ndau Culture in Zimbabwe: Insights on Enculturation Theology. *Journal of*

- Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS)* 4(4). Pp. 589-593.
- Nasseem, S. (2003). African Heritage and Contemporary Life. In Coetzee, P. H. & Roux, A. P. J. (eds.), *Philosophy from Africa*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa. Pp. 259-271.
- Ndubisi, J.O. (2014). Nature and Function of Logic in African Epistemology. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* 19(11). Pp. 32-36.
- Nkomazana, F. (2002). Some Evidence of Belief in the One True God among the Batswana Before the Missionaries in *God. BOLESWA Occasional Papers in Theology and Religion* 1(9). Pp. 51-60.
- Ntloedibe-Kuswani, G.S. (1999). Bongaka, Women and Witchcraft, Women's Worlds. *The 7th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, Session VII: Gendering the Past*. P. 5.
- Oduwole, E. O. (1996). The Yoruba Concepts of Ori and Human Destiny: A Fatalistic Interpretation. *Journal of Philosophy and Development* 2(1 & 2). Pp. 40-52.
- Okolo, B.C. (2003). Self as a Problem in African Philosophy. In Coetze, P. H & Roux, A.P. J. (eds.) *Philosophy from Africa*. London. Oxford University Press. Pp. 209-215.
- O'Mathuna, D. P. (2009). *Nano Ethics: Big Ethical Issues with Small Technology*. London. Continuum.
- Omoregbe, J. I. (1998). *Epistemology: A Systematic and Historical Study*. Lagos. Joja Educational Research & Publications Ltd.
- Onyewuenyi, I. C. (1991). Is There an African Philosophy? In Serequeberhan, T. (ed.), *African Philosophy: The Essential Readings*. St. Paul. Minnesota. Paragon House. Pp. 29-46.

- Oruka, H. O. (1991). Sagacity in African Philosophy. In Serequeberhan, T. (ed.), *African Philosophy: The Essential Readings*. St Paul, MN. Paragon House, pp. 47-62.
- Oyowe, A. (2013). Strange Bedfellows: Rethinking Ubuntu and Human Rights in South African. *African Human Rights Law Journal* 13(1). Pp. 103-124.
- Parfit, D. (1984). *Reasons and Persons*. Oxford. Clarendon Press.
- Pauw, B. A. (1960). *Religion in a Tswana Chiefdom*. London. OUP.
- Peek, P. M. (1991). Introduction: The Study of Divination, Present and Past. In Peek, P. M. *African Divination Systems: Non-Normal Modes of Cognition*. Indianapolis. Indiana University Press. Pp. 193-212.
- Popkin, R. H and Stroll, A. (1993). *Philosophy*. London. Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd.
- Pritchard, D., ed. (2016). *What Is This Thing Called Philosophy?* London. Routledge.
- Ramose, M. B. (1999). *African Philosophy Through Ubuntu*. Harare. Mond Books Publishers.
- Ramose, M. B. (2002). The Philosophy of Ubuntu and Ubuntu as a Philosophy. In Coetzee P.H., and Roux, A.P.J (eds.). *Philosophy from Africa: A Text With Readings*. Cape Town. Oxford University Press. Pp. 230-238.
- Ray, B. (1976). *African Religions*. New Jersey. Prentice Hall.
- Resnik, D. B. (2012). *Bioethics of Gene Therapy*. Chichester. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Rousia R, and Renko R. (2020). Emotions Toward Cognitive Enhancement Technologies and the Body –Attitudes and Willingness to Use. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies* 143. Pp. 1-15.
- Sandel, M. (2007). *The Case Against Perfection: Ethics in the Age of Genetic Engineering*. Cambridge. Harvard University Press.
- Savulescu, J. & Bostrom, N. (eds.). (2009). *Human Enhancement*. Oxford. Oxford University Press.

- Schapera, I. (1953). *The Tswana*. London. International African Institute.
- Schapera, I. (1955). *Handbook of Tswana Law and Customs*. London. Oxford University.
- Senghor, L. S. (1965). *Prose and Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Setiloane, G. (1976). *The Image of God Among the Sotho Tswana*. Rotterdam. Balkema.
- Shutte, A. (2001). *Ubuntu: An Ethics for a New South Africa*. Cluster Publications, Pietermaritzburg.
- Skinner, B. F. (1953). *Science and Human Behavior*. New York. Macmillan.
- Smith, E. (1950). *African Ideas of God*. London. Edinburgh House Press.
- Sober, E. (2009). *Core Questions in Philosophy. A Text with Readings*. London. Pearson Education Ltd.
- Sogolo, G. (1993). *Foundations of African Philosophy: A Definitive Analysis of Conceptual Issues in African Thought*. Ibadan. Ibadan University Press.
- Steyn, G. (2012). The Influence of Botho on Social Space in Botswana Since Independence. *South African Journal of Art History*. 27(3). Pp. 112-129.
- Stumpf, E.S. (1993). *Socrates to Sartre: A History of Philosophy*. New York. McGraw-Hill.
- Stumpf, E. S. and Abel, D. C. (2002). *Elements of Philosophy: An Introduction*. New York. McGraw-Hill.
- Tempels, P. (1959). *Bantu Philosophy*. Translated by Rubbens. A. Paris. Collection Presence Africaine.
- Tirosh-Samuelson, H. (2011). Engaging Transhumanism. In Hansell, G.R. & Grassie, W. (eds.), *Transhumanism & Its Critics*. Philadelphia. Metanexus Institute. Pp. 19-52.
- Tirosh-Samuelson, H. (2012). Transhumanism as a Secularist Faith. *Zygon* 47(4). Pp. 710-734.
- Tirosh-Samuelson, H. & Mossman, K.L. (eds.) (2005). *Building Better Humans? Refocusing the Debate on Transhumanism*. Oxford. Peter Lang.

- Trigg, R. (1988). *Ideas of Human Nature: An Historical Introduction*. Oxford. Blackwell.
- Tutu, D. (2004). *God Has a Dream: A Vision of Hope for our Time*. New York. Doubleday.
- Tutu, D. & Allen, J. (1997). *The Essential Desmond Tutu*. Cape Town. David Philip publishers.
- Udefi, A. (2014). The Rationale for an African Epistemology: A Critical Examination of the Igbo Views on Knowledge, Belief, and Justification. *Canadian Social Science* 10(3). Pp. 108-117.
- Uduigwomen, A. F. (2009). The Place of Oral Tradition in African Epistemology. In Uduigwomen, A.F. (ed.), *From Footmarks to Landmarks on African Philosophy* (2nd edition). Lagos. O.O.P. Ltd.
- Ushe, M. U. (2017). God, Divinities and Ancestors in African Traditional Religious Thought. *Igwebuike: An African Journal of Arts and Humanities* 3(4). Pp.154-179
- Van Der Kooi, R. (2006). Traditional Medicine in Late Pregnancy and Labour Perceptions of Kgaba Remedies Amongst the Tswana in South Africa. *African Journal of Traditional Complementary and Alternative Medicines* 3(1). Pp. 11–22.
- Vellem, V. (2010). Serithi/Isidima: Reflections on Human Dignity in South Africa from a Black African Perspective. In Naude. J. P. (ed.), *Human Dignity- Resources and Challenges for Public Theological Discourse and Practice in Africa Today*. Port Elizabeth. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. Pp. 314-312.
- Verharen, C., Gutema, B., Tharakan, J., Bugarin, F., Fortunak, J., Kadoda, G., Liu, M. And Middendorf, G. (2014). African Philosophy: A Key to African Innovation and Development. *African Journal of Science Technology Innovation and Development* 6(1). Pp. 3-12.
- Willoughby, W. C. (1928). *The Soul of the Bantu*. London. SCM.

- Wilson, R. L. (2017). *Techno-Salvation: Developing a Christian Hermeneutic of Enhancement Technology* (Degree Thesis). Pittsburgh. Duquesne University.
- Wiredu, K. (1980). *Philosophy and an African Culture: The Case of the Akan*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Wiredu, K. (1996). *Cultural Universals and Particulars: An African Perspective*. Bloomington. Indiana University Press.
- Wiredu, K. (2010). Death and the Afterlife in African Culture. In Wiredu, K. and Gyekye, K., eds., *Persons and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies*, 1. Washington DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy. Pp. 137-152.
- Young, S. (2006). *Designer Evolution: A Transhumanist Manifesto*. New York. Prometheus Books.